

THE
FIRST AND SECOND CHAPTERS
OF THE
EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS
CONSIDERED.

WITH REMARKS ON CERTAIN DOCTRINES RECENTLY PROMULGATED
BY THE SAVILIAN PROFESSOR OF GEOMETRY, AND THE
REGIUS PROFESSOR OF GREEK, IN THE
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD.

BY
BENJAMIN WILLS NEWTON,
FORMERLY FELLOW OF EXETER COLLEGE, OXFORD.

SECOND EDITION.

LONDON
THE SOVEREIGN GRACE ADVENT TESTIMONY
SECRETARY

9 Milnthorpe Road, Chiswick, W.4.

1897.

PRICE, 1s. 6d.

1169
BS 2.65 .n1 1897
Newton, Benjamin Hills.
1807-1850.
The first and second
chapters of the epistle to

PRTS
Discarded

Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary
2965 Leonard Street NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49525
USA
616-977-0599

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1897

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RYDE :

PRINTED BY F. W. SARGENT,

CHURCH LANE.

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
REMARKS ON ROMANS I.	
NOTES ON ROMANS I.	22
APPENDIX, CONTAINING REMARKS ON THE STATEMENTS OF PROFESSOR POWELL AND PROFESSOR JOWETT	48
REMARKS ON ROMANS II.	98
NOTES ON ROMANS II.	10

On Romans I.*

THE family of faith, although at different periods of their history they have varied greatly as to degrees of light and knowledge, have, nevertheless, been ever marked by one unchanging feature of similarity. That which has given to them in every age a common likeness, paramount to all dispensational or other distinctions is this—that they have all alike had faith in God testifying respecting Christ. When our first parents, guilty and self-condemned, stood in the presence of their Creator expecting only *judgment*, they suddenly heard from God gracious words of promise respecting the Seed that should come, and they began, for the first time, to regard Him as a God of promise whom they had before looked on only as a judge. From that moment God as the God of promise respecting CHRIST, became the object of saving faith. First, His testimony was to Christ as *about to come*; next, to Christ as *having come*; lastly, to Him as *having come, and died, and ascended*: but in each of these cases God testifying respecting Christ became the object of justifying faith. In this Abel and David and Paul resemble each other—in

* First published in 1856.

that they trusted in the same God bearing testimony to a common salvation in the same Saviour. Their knowledge and dispensational privileges and service varied, but the object of their faith was the same. They were guided by one Spirit to the same Person, even Christ, as their hope; however much their knowledge respecting that Person, and the nature of His work, varied.

For a long time the light vouchsafed to the family of faith was comparatively dim. Even the Lord Jesus Himself during the time of His personal ministry did not unfold all that was intended to be unfolded to the heirs of promise. "I have many things to say unto you," said the Lord Jesus to His disciples, "but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when He the Spirit of Truth is come, He shall guide you into all Truth." Until the Holy Spirit was sent with the definite object of making known "the things that had been freely given of God," great imperfectness of apprehension existed both as to the manner and as to the results of the great redemption: and although it is true that salvation does not depend upon extent or accuracy of knowledge, yet it is, on every account, expedient that the family of faith should have their understandings exercised and enlarged—"in malice being children, in understanding men." Accordingly, to the Apostles was committed the honoured office of explaining to the people of God, the real nature and extent of their blessings. In the Acts, we find the record of the manner in

which the Apostles announced the Gospel to the unbelieving world. Standing in the presence of a mixed multitude, they said, "Men and brethren, through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and through Him, all who believe are justified from all things." Such was their message to the world; but the record of their instruction to the Churches is found in the Epistles. The Epistles were addressed not to the world, but to those who had believed *out of* the world. They were designed to unfold to believers the nature and extent of the grace wherein they stood.

The Apostle Paul was the person especially appointed to confirm the *Gentile* Churches in the grace of God—himself a miracle of grace, saved as "the chief of sinners." Brought up in Jerusalem at the feet of Gamaliel during the personal ministry of the Lord, Paul had doubtless many an opportunity of seeing and hearing the Lord Jesus. But he saw and heard in vain. The character and miracles of the Holy One failed to excite reverence—His bitter sufferings failed to awaken pity, in the heart of Paul. "Reproach," said the Lord Jesus, "hath broken my heart, and I am full of heaviness: and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none: and for comforters, but I found none." Paul withheld the pity, but gave the reproach; and virtually, if not actually, joined with those who crowned Him with thorns and nailed Him to the Tree. And when the time came for Jesus of Nazareth to be no longer seen in

humiliation, and when testimony in the power of the Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven was given to His exaltation in glory—when thousands received remission of sins through faith in His blood, and became themselves witnesses, and that in miraculous power, to the name of Him whom they had crucified, the same hardened heart of Paul which had rejected the Messiah of Israel in His humiliation, continued to reject Him when thus marvellously testified of in glory. Even the words of Stephen full of the Holy Ghost failed to affect him, except as arousing more deeply his fury. Being “exceeding mad” against Jesus and His truth, he blasphemed and rejected the testimony of the Holy Ghost—ignorantly indeed, for if he had done knowingly that which he did ignorantly, he would have passed the limits of pardon, and would have committed the sin which never has forgiveness either in this age or in the age to come.* He took every step except the last. No one could go further in the path of perdition and be saved; for which reason he calls himself “the chief of sinners.” And yet all this time St. Paul admired himself, and was admired by others. He was zealous, conscientious, verily thinking in himself that he was

* “The age to come,” τῷ μελλόντι αἰωνί, *i.e.*, the millennial age in which sins will be forgiven, not the eternal state (as the Papists teach in support of their fictions about Purgatory) in which no sins can be forgiven. In the same way the miraculous gifts of the Spirit are called in Heb. vi., “the powers of the age to come,” because the Pentecostal gifts were a prelibation of that more extensive outpouring of the Spirit that will be in the millennial age.

doing God service. What then is conscience unless guided by the word and Spirit of God? Conscientiousness may attach to those who tread the path of ruin on to its very end. If Paul had been earnest in searching the word of God in the same degree as he was earnest in honouring the traditions of men, he would never have found himself so darkened as to be *conscientiously* a blasphemer.

That St. Paul was saved by grace—full, perfect, unmerited grace, none can deny. Arrested in the very midst of his career of blasphemy, he was in one moment received not merely to forgiveness, but to honour—designated a chosen vessel to bear the name of Christ “before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel.” We can understand this sudden reception into all fulness of blessing when we see that the name of Jesus is that in the value of which God receives His believing people; otherwise, it would be a mystery indeed. We have also the joy of remembering that an hour is coming, when the same riches of abounding grace is to be manifested, not indeed more fully, but more widely. That long blinded and unbelieving nation to which Paul belonged, and of which he may be considered a kind of type, is in like manner to be forgiven—suddenly forgiven. They, too, persist in denying Jesus of Nazareth; they too reject the preached testimony to the value of His blood; and they will persevere in their rejection till the Lord whom they persecute, shall reveal Himself in the brightness of His glory.

Multitudes indeed will perish ; but a remnant large enough to constitute a nation—that nation which is to be “born in a day,” will be spared. They shall be received into the same grace that met St. Paul, and shall go forth to the dark heathen world as the great missionaries of grace to the nations. Then at last, “all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of God.”

The Apostle Paul well understood the nature of this grace and the mode and time of its dispensational development. He knew that the time for his message to be universally welcomed, and to go forth triumphantly over all nations, was not yet come ; and that it never would come until Israel should first “convert and be healed.” Israel, when he wrote this Epistle, had well nigh consummated their national rejection of the Gospel, and were about to be rooted up from their Land and City. The Gospel had gone forth among the Gentiles like Naomi into the land of Moab, and was there gathering “*out of them*” a people. Such had been its effect at Rome. It had there gathered out a few. Rome itself was not converted, nor about to be converted. There was no Church “OF” Rome, as professing Christianity has since impiously said : but there was a Church *IN* Rome—a few who had not shunned the shame of the Cross of Jesus, but had gone “without the camp, bearing his reproach.” They had not only received remission of sins through faith in Jesus, but were also walking in much practical grace. The

Apostle speaks of them as "full of goodness, able also to admonish one another," and says that their faith was spoken of throughout the whole world.

It would seem as if the Holy Spirit had left this description of the Church IN Rome that it might stand in the more vivid contrast with that evil body which has since been called the Church OF Rome. How strange that any should speak of the gradual advance of Truth and Righteousness, when the history of Christianity in Rome stands as an abiding witness to the progression of iniquity! What doctrine of truth, what principle of morality has not been outraged by that body which has obtruded itself into the place of those saints and faithful brethren once gathered as the Church of God IN Rome? There has indeed been progress and development; but the progress has been the progress of falsehood, and the development, the development of iniquity. Nor has the East, where Christianity first flourished, presented a different picture. Ecclesiastical corruption there, has vied with that of the West in extinguishing the lamp of Truth, and in kindling false lights that deceive men into perdition. The Greek and Latin Churches have been sisters in iniquity; and unless the mercy and grace of God had, from time to time, interfered in rekindling the lamp of Truth, idolatry and vice dark as that of Paganism, would have long since reigned over the whole of Christendom. Of these interventions the Protestant Reformation was the chief. But Protestantism early failed in carrying

out its distinguishing principle of adhesion to the Scripture alone. Now its early testimonies are being avowedly abandoned, and the truths for which it contended betrayed. The so-called Protestant nations are virtually resigning the Bible, and giving themselves over, on principles of blind latitudinarianism, to alliances with ecclesiastical idolatry, or with philosophic lies.

The Apostle was not ignorant that Gentile Christianity would decline. He knew that it would not "continue in God's goodness," and that in the last days "perilous times would come." He knew too that prowling wolves were already gathering around the yet enclosed and folded sheep of Christ, seeking, and in some cases finding, entrance. For these and other reasons the Apostle, as a Shepherd under Christ, was anxious to instruct and confirm those circumstanced like the Christians who had been gathered in Rome. "I am ready," said he, "to evangelise you that are at Rome also."

The word "evangelise," is not to be limited to the declaration of the primary grace of the Gospel. In the *everlasting* chain of mercy, forgiveness of sins is indeed the first link by which we are consciously reached, but the links of that chain cannot be separated. Commencing in eternity before the world was, they follow on in fixed and certain consecution until they end in glory. Indeed, even the hour when the Church enters into its glory, can scarcely be said to terminate the sequence, for we read of there still

being "ages to come," in which God will continue to show "the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness towards us through Christ Jesus." The glad tidings which reached Israel in Egypt, while it spake of judgment escaped, spake also of the mercies to come. It told them of the Land in which they should rest ; of God being their portion and their guide ; of His leading them by His strength into His holy habitation. So also in the glad tidings sent to us. It is an announcement not only of forgiveness of sins, but also of imputation of righteousness, of acceptance in the Beloved, and of preservation through His faithful care. Nor is this all : it reveals likewise those final results in glory which attach to those whom grace has made joint-heirs with Him who is the "Heir of all things." The Apostle treats of all these things in this Epistle.

The subject of the first chapter is the condition of the Gentile world when first visited by the Gospel. The Roman saints had mainly been gathered from among the Gentiles, and once had gone with them into all their excesses. The mighty and attractive systems of the Gentiles were still around them in living energy, ready to act upon them seductively. It was on every account expedient that the Church of God should well understand the condition, responsibility, and prospects of the Gentile Pagan world.

Experience shows us that there have been few subjects more vainly speculated on. Some have con-

tended that the Pagan world were without light and without knowledge, and therefore irresponsible ; whilst others assert that they not only had light and knowledge, but that many among them used that light aright, so as to earn salvation thereby. But what is the teaching of the Apostle ? He tells us that the Pagans had light—partial light indeed, but light which their consciences received and recognised ; nevertheless, not one among them acted according to that light. “ Having known God, they glorified Him not as God.”

The knowledge possessed by the Gentiles respecting God is declared in the Scripture to have been threefold : first, knowledge respecting His “ eternal power and divinity ” (*θειότητα*) : secondly, knowledge respecting His goodness : thirdly, knowledge respecting His righteous judgment against iniquities such as those of which they were guilty. Every day and every night, in the heavens above and in the earth beneath, was heard a voice telling them of the eternal power and divinity of the Creator, and it was a voice which their consciences understood, except when they had become self-hardened, or darkened by the judicial infliction of God. “ The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth His handy-work. Day unto day sheweth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard.” “ The invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the

things that are made, even His eternal power and divinity ; so that they are without excuse : because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God." Again, there is a passage in the Acts which teaches us that throughout all the dark evil of the Pagan world, God, by the bounties of His Providence, had maintained a constant testimony to His goodness as well as to His power. "He left not Himself without witness, in that He did good, and gave us rain from Heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness." Lastly, they knew the sentence of God against those who committed atrocities such as they committed. "Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them." Thus then they were acquainted with the power, the kindness, and righteousness of God. How they became possessed of this knowledge respecting the holy judgment of God—how far it was the result of the light of that revelation under which all men were once placed when Noah and his household descended from the Ark, or how far it was maintained by that consciousness which nature itself gives respecting the wickedness of certain abominations, we are not told. Scripture is silent as to this ; and we should never pursue any question one jot further than the Scripture leads. Scripture reveals all that it is expedient for us to know at present—all that is needful to make "the man of God perfect, throughly

furnished unto every good work"; and folly only desires to be "wise beyond what is written." We know this, however, that there is nothing morally good in the mere fact of being conscious that certain things are right and ought to be followed, and that other things are wrong and ought to be eschewed. "*Meliora probo, deteriora sequor*" is the motto of fallen humanity. Moral goodness is not shown by the mere possession of knowledge, but by the manner in which it is used. The sure knowledge that certain viands are noxious, has no power to deter him who is bent on self-gratification. A perverted will (and *that* is the moral characteristic of fallen humanity) will always act contrary to right knowledge. So was it with the Gentiles. They had knowledge respecting the power and glory of God; but this did not prevent them from making blocks of wood and stone as His similitude. They had knowledge respecting the goodness of God, but this did not prevent them from worshipping and adoring idols (in reality devils, 1 Cor. x.) instead of Him. They had knowledge respecting the judgment of God against certain sins; which, nevertheless, they committed, and gloried in the commission. Their knowledge, although not perfect, was, so far as it went, Truth—truth which they held in unrighteousness.* The

* I say "so far as it went," because fulness of Truth is made known only in Christ. To be acquainted with the Almighty power of God as declared by the works of creation, or to know His

word translated "hold," means that they had a firm grasp on it. It was truth which they well understood. Yet they disobeyed their convictions. "Having [thus] known God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful." First, they addicted themselves to vain and proud reasonings; next they gave themselves up to idolatry; and then, *as a sure consequence*, "God gave them over to vile affections," and "to a reprobate mind"; so that they became workers of all iniquity. These three steps in the progress of Gentile evil are plainly marked: first, vain reasonings (verses 21, 22): secondly, idolatry (verse 23): thirdly, uncleanness, &c. "WHEREFORE," that is, because of their turning from God to idols, "God gave them up to uncleanness," &c. Observe the judicial visitation of God on idolatry. The history of Christendom supplies another terrible example of the same thing.*

beneficence towards His creatures, or His judgment against transgression, is not to become acquainted with Himself, or with the methods of His GRACE. God, *as He is*, is known only through and in Jesus. Power, holiness, mercy, and grace, are all combined in Jesus; and in knowing Him, we become acquainted, not with God as seen in *some* of His attributes merely (which is all that creation declares) but with God in His fulness. Hence it is said that the divinity (*θεϊότης*) of God is made known in creation; but *Θεότης* (godhead), a more personal word, is connected with Christ only. "In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead (*Θεότητος*) bodily." (See note on page 46).

* We may soon expect to see this awfully re-manifested in our own once favoured land, where our cathedrals and churches are fast becoming temples of idolatry and sin.

And let it be remembered that the picture drawn in this chapter is not that of uncivilised barbarous heathenism merely, but of the civilised refined heathenism of Greece and Rome. Under the description here given, come the orators and the poets, the statesmen and the philosophers, whose memory Christendom adores — whose sentiments have stamped an abiding moral character on the civilised world—whose writings are placed even by Christian parents in the hands of their offspring in their earliest years, as if that were the way to bring them up in “the nurture and admonition of the Lord.” There are few things in which even real Christians have been more deceived by Satan, than in the estimate which they have formed of the character and condition of the intellectual Gentile world. They have virtually cancelled this chapter and worshipped intellect, without enquiring to what end that intellect is directed. Was not all the intellect of antiquity employed in embellishing its mythology, and what is mythology except the science of worshipping not idols merely, but devils?—for the Apostle authoritatively tells us what the Gentiles sacrificed “they sacrificed to devils, and not to God.”

Historic facts (though the corroboration of facts is not demanded by a believer when he knows that God has spoken)—historic facts however do abundantly corroborate this fearful description of the Gentile world. The best and the most admired of the ancient

legislators and philosophers sanctioned, and not unfrequently practised, the very grossest of the vices mentioned in this chapter. If any ceased to be idolaters, they became Atheists. Socrates lived and died an idolater, his last act being a direction to sacrifice to Æsculapius; and it is written that “no idolater hath inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.” Yet many talk deistically about the Gentiles being saved by obedience to the light that was among them, when facts as well as Scripture prove that they deliberately disobeyed all the light they had received. The only ones whom we can speak of as being saved amongst them were they who having received the Scripture, or light from the Scripture, through intercourse with Israel, were thereby guided to the promises that spake of GRACE and of the ONE NAME “given among men, whereby we must be saved.” Such was the Centurion (Matt. viii.) and the Syro-Phenician woman, and Cornelius, and others. Being “of faith,” they became, in God’s sight, children of Abraham, and “heirs according to the promise.”

Yet, great and terrible as the iniquity of the Pagan world was, it was not too great for the Gospel of the grace of God to reach. They who could not be justified by their deeds, could be justified through the redemption that was in Christ Jesus. They who could not be justified in their *own* names, could be justified if received in the preciousness of the name of *Another*. Acceptance in the name of Christ was

the proposal which God made to sinners in the Gospel which St. Paul was sent to preach to the lost Gentile world. Many were thus gathered out from among the Gentiles.

Whilst the Apostles laboured, the Gentile Churches continued to be "epistles of Christ." They expressed His mind, and bore living testimony to His truth. They were as "candlesticks of gold" — light of heavenly brightness, shining in the midst of the world's thick darkness. But the early light of Christianity soon waned. I have already referred to the contrast between what the Church *in* Rome was, and what the Church *of* Rome has been and is, as a means by which we may measure the extent of the departure of Christendom from God. It is true indeed that there have been and will be individuals, who, struggling against the current of the time, are measurably in their day what Jeremiah was; but individual testimony, however bright, is very different from the united corporate testimony of the unfallen Church, standing as the "pillar and ground of the Truth." The light of an isolated star, or even of a constellation, differs greatly from that of "the moon, walking in brightness."

If any one questions the truth of what has been said respecting the corruption in which this present dispensation ends, let him compare the concluding part of the chapter before us with 2 Tim. iii. 1—5.

ROMANS I.

2 TIMOTHY III.

DESCRIPTION OF THE GENTILE
WORLD BEFORE IT WAS VISIT-
ED BY THE GOSPEL.

“Filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,

“Without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful,

“Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.”

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROFESSING
GENTILE CHURCH AT THE END
OF THE AGE.

“This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

“For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

“Without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,

“Traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

“Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.”

How, after comparing these two passages, can we speak of the progress of good in the present dispensation? The steps in which the professing Church has advanced in corruption, resemble very closely those afore trodden by the Heathen. First, they gave themselves over to vain reasonings. See the early history of philosophic Christianity at Alexandria, Antioch, and Constantinople. On “philosophy and vain deceit” followed idolatry. With idolatry came every form of flagitiousness and abomination. Witness the history of the Church of Rome. “The annals of Christendom,” said the infidel Lord Bolingbroke, “have been the annals of Hell.” This has ever been the boast of infidelity, which has found in the corruptions of Christianity a palliation

for its blasphemies. True Christianity was sent to deliver, and did deliver, many of the Gentiles from idolatry : false Christianity has led back to idolatry again. We have equally to beware of misrepresenting to ourselves the condition of the Pagan Gentiles, or of the now nominally Christianised Gentiles. Even true Christians shrink from steadily contemplating the condition of either in the light of Scripture.

Never then let us read this chapter of the Epistle to the Romans without calling to remembrance the practical condition of the apostolic Churches, and contrasting it not only with that of Christendom at large, but also with that of the true and living members of the body of Christ, united once, but now scattered ; holily separate once, but now too frequently linked to and fraternising with the world, not only in things of the world, but even in things that concern God's Truth and God's testimonies. And if even in the Apostles' days the instruction of such an Epistle as this was needful, not only for the comfort and encouragement of the saints of God, but also for their correction and for the repression of thoughts which even in *them* were ready to rise and reply against God, how much more must a reverent regard to such instructions be required now, when so many false teachers have arisen, and so many tongues have learned to reason rebelliously against God. Whenever therefore we hear the voice of falsehood saying either that the Heathen are

irresponsible because that they have no light, or that they have light and can save themselves by obeying it—whenever we hear light derived from external testimony confounded with that inward light which is found in none except those who through faith in Jesus have received the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit—whenever we hear the guilt of idolatry palliated and declared to be “consistent with TRUTH and purity of life”—whenever we hear the poetry and philosophy and taste of antiquity extolled, and the sages of Greece and Rome spoken of as if enlightened and guided by the Spirit of God—whenever we are tempted to worship intellect and to sacrifice the welfare, or perhaps the salvation of the souls of our children by subjecting them to the power of the philosophy and mythology of Paganism—whenever such seductions of evil meet us, let us call to remembrance the words of this chapter, and gird ourselves with its truth. And if ever we should be tempted to think that it matters little, seeing that all sin is sin, to what extent the path of transgression is trodden, let us again remember the instructions of this chapter. Men had deliberately advanced many steps in the path of evil before God “*gave them over* to a reprobate mind” and to “vile affections” (see verses 26, 28). Shall we say that it is immaterial whether men do or do not advance to that point of evil at which God “gives them over” to its power? And although it is true that the voice of natural conscience is not the voice of

God (nor, if it were, would it save, for the wilfulness of the human heart would disobey it), yet we must beware of saying that it matters not whether conscience in the unconverted be utterly hardened, or whether it retain some measure of susceptibility to the appeals of God. Even Felix and Agrippa, when they listened to Paul, had not reached the same hardihood of evil as that to which Pilate had been brought by his proud scepticism, or Gallio by his indifferentism. In influencing others therefore, especially if we have the opportunity of training youthful minds, let us do everything that in us lies to maintain in them susceptibility of conscience, and to keep the light of Scripture bearing on their hearts. "From a child," said St. Paul to Timothy, "thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." And although the mere habituation of the eye to light will not secure the right use of light, yet on the other hand it is certain that an eye that never sees the light will soon become intolerant of all light, and perish in darkness.

Many of the thoughts connected with these things must at present be painful. The mighty influence still exercised by the idolatry of ancient Paganism, the living presence of Christianised idolatry, the voice of rationalism heralding the hour of coming antichristian blasphemy, all speak alike of ruin. An hour of temptation is coming to try them that dwell upon the earth. Rev. iii. 10. Yet the Gospel of the

grace of God is not yet silenced. It is still "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." This was the comfort of the Apostle as he contemplated the evil that was around him. He was not unconscious of its magnitude, yet that very consciousness only gave him fresh vigour in carrying on his priestly work of making known the savour of the name of Christ—a sweet-smelling savour of rest and of salvation to every one that should believe. There were then, and there still are some who, through grace, prefer to dwell under the fragrance of that name to being found in the worthlessness and ill-savour of their own names. To such, whether in the earth now, or whether as hereafter in the heavens, it shall ever be as the holy incense covering them in the presence of their God with the power of its own perfectness, even for ever and ever.

NOTES ON CHAPTER I.

Verse 1.

“ Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, a called Apostle, separated unto the Gospel of God.”

A servant.] Literally, a bond-servant or slave. The thought of purchase is, I suppose, intended, as well as that of eternal possession by Him who has bought His believing people by His own blood. To be the property of an earthly master, may be one of the greatest of curses; but to be the purchased, unalienable possession of God and of Christ, and to have the sure title of serving them for ever, is everlasting blessing. When God is brought into the relationship, a word for the most part terrible on earth, is changed into one of joy and honour. Thus it is applied even to the saints in glory; for when the heavenly City is described in the Revelation, it is said, “ The throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants (*δουλοι*) shall serve Him.” (Rev. xxii. 3).

Among the ordinances of Israel, we find permission granted to the servant to make himself, if he so

pleased, a bond-servant for ever. "If the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free: Then his master shall bring him unto the judges; . . . and he shall serve him for ever." (Exodus xxi. 5.)

A called Apostle.] That is, an Apostle duly called unto his office by God, and therefore not self-constituted. An Apostle by Divine vocation. The truth of their calling the Apostles were able to prove by miracles, special miraculous powers being granted to them for the very purpose of attesting their Apostleship.

I need scarcely say that "Apostle" is here used in its full official sense, as in Luke vi. 13, where it is said, that the Lord selected twelve out of His disciples, "whom also He named *Apostles*." See also 1 Cor. ix. 1, where St. Paul says, "Am I not an Apostle?" There were *twelve* Apostles whose labours were peculiarly directed towards the circumcision (Matthias having been elected into the place of Judas) and *two* Apostles whose labours were directed towards the Gentiles, viz., Paul and Barnabas.

The Apostles could speak and write to the churches with the authority of God; *but with them Divine legislation ceased*. Few things can be of greater moment than to remember that the Apostles in their peculiar office had *no successors*. Since they were removed, there had been none who have had authority either to write Scripture, or to sanction as Scripture that which others had written; as when

St. Paul quoted *as Scripture* the Gospel of Luke.* Nor could any except the Apostles, or those immediately associated with them and acting in their presence, bestow by the imposition of hands spiritual gifts. Such things indeed have been, and are, pretended to, but we have to remember those solemn words, "Thou hast tried them which say they are Apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars." Rev. ii. 2.

Sometimes the word "Apostle" is used in its ordinary, non-official sense, meaning simply a person sent by another on some special mission. It is twice thus used in the New Testament, viz. in 2 Cor. viii. 23; and in Phil. ii. 25.

Separated.] The word translated "separated," means literally, *to limit off by a line or boundary*, and hence *to separate*. Separation was a familiar but hallowed thought to every Jew. Israel was as a whole, a separated people: and within Israel itself, there were many lesser circles of separation. Thus the Levites were separated; the Nazarite was separated; and afterwards (though not by the commandment of God) the Pharisee was separated—the name Pharisee being derived from a Hebrew word which means "to separate." Thoughts which were of hallowed meaning among the Jews were purposely embodied by the Apostles in their expressions, and used in fresh applications. St. Paul had not ceased

* See 1 Tim. v. 18. "*For the Scripture saith . . . The labourer is worthy of his hire*"—words quoted from Luke x. 7.

to value true separation because he had renounced that of the mere ritual Jew. He was still a "separated one"—separated, and that by God Himself, unto the ministration of His gospel—separated therefore unto true priestly service.

Gospel of God.] This expression should be noted. The Apostles continually speak of the Gospel as "the Gospel of God;" for it was God who sent His only begotten Son; it was God who gave that Son unto death; it is God who is now engaged in the ministry of reconciliation, "preaching peace through Jesus Christ." Thus God testifying of Jesus becomes the ultimate object of saving faith. Accordingly, St. Peter speaking of believers says, "Who through Him [Jesus] do believe in God, that raised Him up from the dead, and gave Him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God." Sometimes the Gospel has been preached in a way that hides this manifestation of the love of God, and represents Him as hard to be appeased, and with difficulty prevailed on through the intercession of Christ to show mercy. Such a mode of preaching the Gospel entirely nullifies the expression, "Gospel of God," as well as every other passage that speaks of God Himself having provided the reconciliation. *It is most true indeed that His justice demanded expiation.* The maintenance of the holiness of the Divine government required atonement, *and that by death*; but God's own love provided that atonement; thus fulfilling that early expression of Abraham's confi-

dence—"My son, God will provide Himself a lamb for a burnt-offering." Hence that covenant name, "Jehovah Jireh," the Lord will provide. It must be remembered, however, that none are brought under the blessing of that name, nor under the reconciliation resulting from atonement except believers. To others it is said, "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish!" They put mercy from them, "and judge themselves unworthy of everlasting life."

Verse 2.

"Which He afore promised by His Prophets in the Holy Scriptures."

Which He afore promised, &c.] These words sufficiently refute a dangerous doctrine recently promulgated by some who teach that the Gospel preached by St. Paul was something so peculiar and so new, that it was not, and could not have been, the subject of any definite statement or promise in the Old Testament.

Can there be a clearer intimation of the forgiveness of all believers through the vicarious sufferings of a substitute than that contained in the 53rd chapter of Isaiah—"He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities; . . . and by His stripes we are healed"? [Observe the words "we" and "our" refer to believers, not to men as

men. The words are supposed to be spoken by *believing* Israel when they shall at last own Him whom they have rejected ; and they may be appropriated by all believers.] Again, is not the union of believers with their risen Lord distinctly taught in the 26th chapter of the same Prophet, where the saints who have died in Israel are spoken of as His “dead body,” *i.e.*, Christ’s mystical body ; and as such it is said, “they shall arise.” “Thy” (Jerusalem or Israel is addressed at the time of their forgiveness)—“thy dead men shall live, my dead body they shall arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust : for thy dew is as the dew of lights, and the earth shall cast out the dead.” Are we not also continually accustomed to appeal to those well known words, “The Lord our righteousness” (Jer. xxiii. 6), as teaching us that Christ is the righteousness of all them that believe ? And are not these the very same truths that St. Paul was commissioned to unfold ?

It is true indeed that for the Gospel and its resulting blessings to be *prophetically announced*, is a very different thing from its being so ministered as *to be explained and applied*. The Gospel was prophetically announced by Isaiah, but Isaiah was not sent, as the Apostles were, to preach it. In this he differed from Philip, who *was* sent to preach it ; but Philip preached it, be it remembered, from Isaiah’s predictions—beginning at the same Scripture, he preached unto him (the eunuch) Jesus. (See Acts viii. 35.)

The Gospel, although prophetically stated in the Old Testament, was necessarily “kept silent” (to use the expression of St. Paul) until the Law had run its course; for how could grace be *preached* under a dispensation of Law? But as soon as the time came for the full ministration of grace to begin, then it was “kept in silence” no longer, but was “manifested,” and by means of the prophetic Scriptures, “made known.” The words of the Apostle are these, “Now to Him that is able to establish you according to my Gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, kept silent (σέσιγμενου) since the world began, but now made manifest, and by means of the prophetic Scriptures . . . made known,” &c. (δια τε Γραφων προφητικων γνωρισθεντος). How could that be made known by means of the Prophetic Scriptures which was not in them? Or how, if the truths respecting Christ were not announced in the Old Testament, could the Apostle Peter have said that the Prophets prophesied of the grace now brought unto us? (οί περι της εις υμας χαριτος προφητευσαντες.) Or how could the Apostle Paul have said that the Gospel which he preached was “borne witness to by the Law and the Prophets”? (Rom. iii. 21.)

Some have asked whether the expression “my gospel,” used by St. Paul, does not imply that he had a peculiar gospel different from that of the other Apostles: but it might as well be asked whether the words, “my God,” used in the 8th verse, do not

imply a peculiarity of relationship to God, different from that of other believers.

That which had *most* the character of a new revelation in St. Paul's ministry, was his being commissioned to declare that believing Gentiles were to be admitted into full fellowship of heavenly blessing with believing Israelites ; but even this was not peculiar to the ministry of St. Paul, for he expressly mentions other Apostles as sharing it with him. When speaking of the dispensation of the grace of God that had been given him towards the Gentiles, he adds, " which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men *as it is now revealed unto His holy Apostles and Prophets* by the Spirit, that the Gentiles should be *FELLOW-heirs*," &c. It must be remembered too, that even though the Law and the Prophets testified to the Gospel of the grace of God as something *future*, and although the servants of God after Sinai were dispensationally placed under the Law, and therefore the *ostensible* dealings of God with them in the earth were according to Law, and not according to grace, yet that still all who were " of faith " were, as to all their heavenly and everlasting blessings, not under law, but under that covenant of grace which God made with Abraham four hundred years *before* the Law, and which therefore could not be disannulled by the Law. Thus Moses, being as regarded his earthly relation to Israel under Law, was judged according to its strictness, and was not allowed to enter the promised

Land. If his heavenly inheritance had been held on the same tenure he would have lost that also. But it was not. As to that, he was under the covenant of *grace*, and therefore on the Mount of Transfiguration we find him standing by the side of the Lord, his Redeemer, bright in the excellency of the like glory.

Verse 3.

“Concerning His Son who became (του γενομενου) of the seed of David according to the flesh.”

Concerning His Son, &c.] There are three senses in which Christ is called in Scripture the “Son of God :” first in respect of His Divine and eternal Sonship, as the only begotten of the Father before all worlds. This, His eternal Sonship, is plainly taught in such texts as Micah v. 2, “whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting ;” and Hebrews vii. 3, where the fact of Melchizedek having no recorded genealogy in Genesis, is referred to as constituting him *typically* (not actually) an eternal person, and therefore used to foreshadow the Eternal Son. “Without father, without mother, ungenealogised (αγενεαλογητος) having neither beginning of days, nor end of life ; but made like unto the Son of God,” &c.—that is, made like to the Son

in respect of having neither beginning of days, nor end of life. The eternal Sonship of the Son, like the self-existence of God, are truths to be believed on the testimony of God, not truths to be reasoned on. With respect to the Son it is emphatically said, "No one knoweth the Son, but the Father." If we seek by the powers of our finite understanding to grasp mysteries which God has not explained, we shall soon find ourselves lost in a labyrinth of unhallowed speculation. Arianism, the heresy against which the Nicene Creed was written, affords an awful example of this. The Nicene Creed truly says, speaking of the Son, "Light of light, very God of very God, begotten not made, being of one substance with the Father." This we receive, not because our understandings grasp it, but because it is WRITTEN. We wait to understand it in the ages to come.

Secondly, the name "Son of God" is applied to Christ as born in the world. Thus it was said to Mary by the angel, "That holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."

Thirdly, the same name is used of Him as raised from the dead, in reference to which it is said to Him, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee"—words quoted by St. Paul, and applied to the resurrection of the Lord. See Acts xiii. 33. Hence also He is called both in the Epistle to the Colossians and in the Revelation—"the first-born from the dead."

Now inasmuch as the Gospel of God concerning His Son is not confined merely to the birth, death, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus, but also includes testimony to the dignity of that Eternal Person who became man, I should regard the words, "concerning His Son," as especially intended to direct our minds to the Son in His Eternal Sonship before He became flesh; the more so, because the next clause speaks of His having become flesh—"concerning His Son who became of the seed of David according to the flesh."

The words, "according to the flesh," are contrasted with the words "according to the Spirit" which occur in the succeeding verse. The contrast between these two expressions should be carefully noted. The first refers to that *physically* weak and lowly, though sinless condition of humanity, which once pertained to the Lord Jesus here; the second refers to that glorified condition of humanity which He now has in the heavens, a condition which is no longer "according to the flesh," but "according to the Spirit," even His body being spiritual, and strength and glory being as essentially the characteristics of His humanity in its present condition above, as weakness and humiliation were connected with its former condition here. Thus we find in 2 Cor. xiii. 4, "For though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God." See also 2 Cor. v. where we are told that though we once knew Christ after, or according to (*κατα*), the

flesh, "yet now henceforth know we Him (so) no more." We know Him henceforth only in resurrection as the Head of the new creation of God, where every thing is altogether spiritual or according to the Spirit, not according to the flesh.

Nevertheless, although now no longer "known after the flesh," the results of His having been in the flesh remain. Not only were His meritorious obedience and sufferings on behalf of His people accomplished in the flesh, but through Mary He became the lineal heir of the blessings covenanted to Abraham and to David ("for to Abraham and to his SEED were the promises made," Gal. iii. 16,) in virtue of which heirship He will by and by assume manifestly the headship of Israel and over all nations. (See Psalm lxxii.) This gives great future as well as past importance to the title, "Son of David." Nevertheless, when manifested in His millennial glory, He will never be known "according to the flesh" again, that is, He will never again have that *condition* of humanity which He once had in the days of His humiliation. His earthly titles, even when He will manifestly exercise the offices which those titles indicate, will never again bring Him into a condition "according to the flesh." They are titles into which He brings the excellency of His own fulness, and raises them with Himself into His own sphere of heavenly and Divine glory. How very different were the *circumstances* in which the Lord Jesus was manifested when John leaned on

His bosom at the Last Supper, and when he saw Him in His glory above and fell at His feet as dead. How conscious was John of the difference. Yet it was the same Lord Jesus. The circumstances were different ; but He was the same—"the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." When it is said in the verse that follows, that the Lord Jesus was "*declared*" to be the Son of God in power by resurrection, the word "*declared*," is not an adequate rendering for the Greek word *ὁρισθεῖς*. That word in its primitive sense means to mark out by a boundary line or limit, answering to the Hebrew word *גבל* *to bound*, as used in Exodus xix. 23, "Set bounds around the mountain." This is evidently the sense intended in the passage before us. That condition of resurrection life and glory which now surrounds the Lord Jesus as by a circle, not only marks Him as being the Son of God, but marks Him as being this by a palpable line of demarcation distinguishing Him from every thing that is according to the flesh as known below.

The being thus visibly brought by resurrection into a distinct sphere of spiritual existence "in power" (Rom. i. 4), and "in glory" (1 Tim. iii. 16), "in heavenly places" (Eph. ii. 6), did not make the Lord Jesus Son of God, for He was so already: nor did it for the first time *declare* Him to be so, for His words, His character, and His miracles had continually declared Him to be this before His resurrection, and He was not unfrequently so owned. "*Defined*"

or "determined" would not be objectionable translations if they could be used in their *etymological* sense to indicate the being marked out as by a boundary, but those words are not used except in their secondary meaning. In Latin, "intra terminos suos constitutus," and "terminis suis distinctus" have been proposed as phrases correctly conveying the force of the expression. We want a word suitable to express the thought of being marked by a defining and distinguishing limit.

Verses 7 and 8.

"To all the beloved of God in Rome, called saints; grace unto you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ."

This verse is to be read in connection with the first, all between being parenthetical. The benedictions which commonly preface the Epistles are well worthy of meditation. They show the everlasting relation of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost in blessing towards all who have believed in the name of Jesus.

Whom I serve in my spirit, &c.] Serve (λατρεῖν) was in the ears of an Israelite a word of Levitical or of priestly meaning—a word therefore of dignity and honour which Israel could once appropriate to

themselves, but which had now become transferred to the Apostle and others who, like himself, were servants of Jesus Christ. The Apostle was still carrying on the priestly services of the God of Israel—that service which Israel had lost. He was carrying it on not outwardly merely, or in the way of ceremonial ordinances, but in and with his spirit. His was the service of the inner man, not that of the lips or of the hand merely. Thus the true priestly service of God never ceases. It is independent of all external circumstances, and can be continued by a believer even in the hour of death. He has ever an unseen Temple to which he has access; ever an altar—ever incense—ever a mercy-seat. Through the one finished sacrifice of the Cross, he is at once consecrated as a priest, and priestly services are secured to him for ever. The thought of unremitted priestly service is largely dwelt on in the Epistles.

Yet this inward service of his spirit was not unconnected with developed activity of thought and action, as all his labours and sufferings in the Gospel testified.

Verse 17.

“For therein is the righteousness of God revealed, to wit, the righteousness of God that is from faith is revealed to faith, according as it is written, He that is righteous from faith [i.e., he whose righteousness is derived from faith, not from works] shall live.”

The awakening of Luther's mind to a right apprehension of the sense in which the words "righteousness of God" are used in this Epistle was instrumentally the cause of the Reformation. He had thought that these words referred to righteousness as an attribute of God, and therefore he had regarded the Gospel as a system of modified law under which life was to be earned by obedience. But when he thought of these words as meaning, not righteousness as a Divine attribute, but the righteousness with which God invests, and in which He accepts believers, the light of grace broke in on Luther's soul, and he understood the Gospel.

The two following passages sufficiently shew the sense in which the words, "the righteousness of God" are here used. The first is in Romans iii. 21, "But now without the Law the righteousness of God is manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all, and upon all them that believe." And again, "Not having mine own righteousness, which is of the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is of God through faith." (Phil. iii. 9.)

Wherever we find the expression "righteousness of faith," it must mean that justifying righteousness which is of God through faith, for we cannot speak of God's own righteousness being derived from faith or from anything, seeing that His righteousness is underived, essential, and from everlasting. But the

righteousness which attaches to believers, seeing that it results *instrumentally* from faith, not from works, is described as springing out of or from faith—*ἐκ πίστεως*. Hence the Apostle in speaking of the Gospel, says, “Therein is the righteousness of God revealed, to wit, the righteousness of God which is of or from faith (*ἐκ πίστεως*) is revealed to faith.” The justifying righteousness in which a believer is accepted may well be termed the righteousness of God, for it is appointed by God, prepared by God in Christ Jesus, and is put on us by God. It is in every sense His work and His gift. And if God is pleased to grant to us a righteousness which springs from faith, not from works, it follows that such righteousness, when the mode of attaining it is spoken of, must be spoken of as an object revealed to faith, and not as anything proposed to works for attainment. Hence this righteousness is said to be “*of faith*,” and to be revealed “*unto faith*”—*ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν*. A system of justifying by faith is necessarily one that is proposed to faith. Faith has to do with that which is proposed to faith, just as works have to do with that which is proposed to works. Yet it must be remembered that when we speak of righteousness springing from or being derived from faith, we speak of faith only as an instrument, and not as anything that is in itself meritorious. If any one standing on a rock casts a rope to another who is struggling in the waters and saves him, there is a sense in which we may speak

of the safety of that person as resulting from his having grasped the cord, but it is in a sense very different from that in which we ascribe it to the strength or kindness of him who threw it. Faith is only as the act of the hand that grasps the proffered aid. In the fourth chapter of this Epistle, the Apostle expressly contrasts faith with works of righteousness: and so far from regarding it as in itself righteousness, or as the meritorious root of righteousness, says, on the contrary, that it is imputed FOR righteousness. Faith has, in the arrangements of God's grace, an attributed value which intrinsically it has not, just as a note stamped by the authority of the Government obtains a conventional value which intrinsically it has not. "To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted FOR righteousness." It must be remembered too, that faith imputed FOR righteousness, and the imputed righteousness of Christ, are two very distinct, though connected, branches of doctrine. But this subject must be resumed elsewhere. The passage from the Old Testament by which the Apostle confirms his statement is quoted from the Prophet Habakkuk. "He that is righteous from faith shall live"; *i.e.*, he whose righteousness is derived from faith, not from works, shall not perish but live. That such is the connection of the words is manifest, not only from the accentuation of the Hebrew, but also from the expression *δικαιοσυνη εκ πιστεως* (righteousness derived from faith)

so often used by the Apostle—an expression avowedly founded on the words of Habakkuk. The connection and force of the quotation is lost by translating it, “the just shall live by faith.” It is thus commonly understood to refer to the continuous life or walk of faith—a subject foreign to this verse.

“*Who hold the truth in unrighteousness.*”] The truth here spoken of is defined in a succeeding verse to be “the eternal power and divinity of God” borne witness to by the works of creation around them. This truth their understandings had fully grasped. They had a firm hold on it (such is the meaning of *κατεχω*) but they acted contrary to their convictions, and this proved their guilt.

Some have proposed to render *κατεχω* “to keep under,” or “hold down.” But its simple meaning is *to hold fast*, (*κατα* being intensive,) as when we hold fast a prisoner, a treasure, or any thing of which we have firm possession. Compare 1 Cor. vii. 30, “and they that buy as though they possessed not”—*ὡς μη κατεχοντες* *i.e.*, as if they had no firm hold on that which they had bought. See also Heb. x. 23. “Let us *hold fast* the profession of our hope,” &c. In Matt. xxi. 38, it is rendered in our version, “seized on,” but should be more properly translated, “let us hold fast, or keep hold of his inheritance,” for the inheritance having been let out to the wicked husbandmen was already in their possession.

The intensive force of *κατα* in composition will be familiar to every reader of Greek. An instance in 1 Cor. ix. 18, deserves to be noted, where *καταχραομαι* does not mean “to abuse” as it is wrongly rendered in our version, but “to use thoroughly or fully.” St. Paul would not have *abused* his authority (as our version seems to imply) if he had demanded support for himself and his fellow-labourers, but he chose rather to “make the Gospel without charge,” so as not to exert or use to the full (*εις το μη καταχρησασθαι*) his authority in the Gospel. A similar correction should be made in 1 Cor. vii. 31,—“and they that use this world, as not abusing it.” We are here directed not merely, not to *abuse* the world, but we are told not to use it with any degree of earnestness at all.

It could scarcely be said that the Gentiles by their unrighteousness kept down or imprisoned the truth of the eternal power and Godhead of God. That truth was testified to by all creation. “The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth His handy work.” It was a truth that they could not imprison, for it was beyond their reach; but they could and did hold it in unrighteousness.

Verse 19.

“Because that which is known of God is manifest among them; for God hath manifested it unto them.”

That which is known of God, is defined in the next verse to be His eternal power and divinity (*θειότης*) as borne witness to by the works of creation. The source of this testimony, therefore, is not in men, but is something external to them. This *external* testimony is addressed to the conscience—conscience being a natural power in man capable, unless its susceptibility has been destroyed by transgression, of apprehending (though not of obeying) the appeals addressed to it by God, whether such appeals reach it through the works of creation or through the living testimony of His Spirit in the lips of His servants, as when Paul spake and Felix trembled. Conscience is to man's moral nature what the sense of seeing or of feeling is to his body. If hardened by prolonged transgression it may lose its native susceptibility so as to cease to recognise the appeals of truth, just as the eye may become so diseased as to be incapable of receiving light; but even when the conscience does recognise the truth of that which is addressed to it, such recognition implies nothing morally good in the person who so recognises; for the test of moral goodness is obedience to that which is right, not the mere fact of recognition. The eye may recognise that there is a precipice before it, yet he that is bent on self-destruction will nevertheless walk on. Experience may teach us that certain kinds of food are baneful, yet if they be sweet and pleasant we may, in spite of our conviction, resolve to take them. In the last great day it will be satisfactorily shown that all

who are condemned will have acted against some light that has been vouchsafed to them—light which their consciences either had, or might have recognised.

And yet, notwithstanding the plain and unequivocal testimony of this chapter, certain writers from whom better things might have been expected, persist in quoting with approval those infidel words,

“The partial light men have,
My creed instructs me, well employed, may save.”

No doubt if partial light were obeyed, more and more light would be given until all fulness of light was communicated, and so men would be saved by their own faithful obedience, and therefore salvation by grace would not be needed. But what says the Scripture? “If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.” Gal. iii. 21. Shall we venture to nullify a statement so unequivocal as this?

Conscience may, by a figure of speech, be termed the eye of the soul, and there is a sense in which we may call the eye a light, but only in the sense in which we call a lamp a light, or a window a light, not as being themselves originators of light, but as communicating or transmitting it when derived from some external source. In the natural heart there is

nothing which has either the power of originating or maintaining light, or of giving ability to obey it. It pertains only to those who are quickened in Christ Jesus and have received of His Spirit to have Divine light within them, and power to walk therein. The unregenerate have it not, and no words can adequately describe the awfulness of the responsibility incurred by those who, either by the fiction of baptismal regeneration, or by the worse fiction of representing all men as having *naturally* the Spirit of God, deceive the world into the belief that they have life toward God, when in reality they are "dead in trespasses and sins." To such we may preach the Gospel of the grace of God and say, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved;" but it is a cruel mockery to exhort them to obey God, or to love God, or to act for Him, until they have first received life; and life can only be received through faith in Jesus. "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."

Nothing indeed can present a more awfully deceptive view of the condition of men than to teach them that God, or that the Spirit of God is in them whilst they are yet dead in trespasses and sins. Yet this has ever been, under various modifications, the favorite doctrine of the natural heart. The doctrine of Marcus Antoninus, the great persecutor of the Christians, was that God was in him. National Churches, which nationalise Christianity, and every sect which embraces the unbelieving, must, in some way or

other, make it the foundation of their false brotherhood : and whether the seed of grace be confined to the baptised, as in the Greek, Latin, and other Churches, or extended, as by the "Friends" and by many of the "Broad Church," to the whole of mankind, it becomes in its practical result, the same deadly doctrine of universalised regeneration. Exactly in proportion as that doctrine becomes influential, will obedience to a principle within, instead of faith in the sacrifice of Christ upon the Cross, be made the subject of exhortation to an unbelieving world. Nor can the distinctive privileges of the Church be consistently held. The sanctification of believers by the blood of the Cross; their union with Christ as "the second Man, the last Adam;" the truth of their having died and having been together raised (Eph. ii. 6) in Christ Jesus, as their *new* covenant Head — all these things must either be neglected altogether, or else lowered down into suitability of application to the world; which after all is deceived and taught to believe that they are *partially*, if not wholly, reconciled and brought into a Father's house, whilst "having neither part nor lot therein." The moment any one has looked with the most trembling faith to Jesus as the antitypical serpent of brass—the moment he has cast himself on God through the blood of the Lamb, we are justified in saying, that he is born of God, but not before.

On *θειότης* as distinguished from *θεότης*.

This distinction to which I have referred above, is thus commented on by Professor Trench, in his "Synonyms of the New Testament," p. 7:—

"Neither of these words occurs more than once in the New Testament; *θειότης* only at Rom. i. 20; *θεότης* at Col. ii. 9. We have rendered both by 'Godhead;' yet they must not be regarded as identical in meaning, nor even as two different forms of the same word, which in process of time have separated off from one another, and acquired different shades of significance. On the contrary, there is a real distinction between them, and one which grounds itself on their different derivations; *θεότης* being from *Θεός*, and *θειότης*, not from *τὸ θεῖον*, which is nearly though not quite equivalent to *Θεός*, but from the adjective *θεῖος*.

"Comparing the two passages where they severally occur, we shall at once perceive the fitness of the employment of one word in one, of the other in the other. In the first (Rom. i. 20) St. Paul is declaring how much of God may be known from the revelation of Himself which He has made in nature, from those vestiges of Himself which men may everywhere trace in the world around them. Yet it is not the personal God whom any man may learn to know by these aids; He can be known only by the revelation of Himself in His Son; but only His

Divine attributes, His majesty, and glory. This Theophylact feels, who gives *μεγαλειότης* as equivalent to *θειότης* here; and it is not to be doubted that St. Paul uses this vaguer, more abstract, and less personal word, just because he would affirm that men may know God's power and majesty from His works; but would *not* imply that they may know Himself from these, or from anything short of the revelation of His Eternal Word.

“ But in the second passage (Col. ii. 9) St. Paul is declaring that in the Son there dwells all the fulness of absolute Godhead; they were no mere rays of Divine glory which gilded Him, lighting up His person for a season and with a splendour not His own; but He was, and is, absolute and perfect God; and the Apostle uses *θείότης* to express this essential and personal Godhead of the Son. Thus Beza rightly: ‘ Non dicit: *τὴν θειότητα*, *i.e.*, divinitatem, sed *τὴν θεότητα*, *i.e.*, deitatem, ut magis etiam expresse loquatur; . . . ἡ *θείότης* attributa videtur potius quam naturam ipsam declarare.’ And Bengel: ‘ Non modo divinæ virtutes, sed ipsa divina natura.’ ”

APPENDIX.

[The following observations have considerably exceeded the intended limit—that of a supplementary note. I have however thought it best to insert them in this place. In estimating the fall of professing Christianity, it is as needful to consider the state of Protestantism as that of Romanism; and to a large and influential section of Protestantism, Oxford has stood in the same relation as Rome has to the Catholicism of Western Europe. That the voice of Infidelity denying the infallibility and strict truthfulness of God's Holy Word should be allowed to speak from any in Oxford unsilenced, is no unimportant sign of this sorrowful hour.]

Φασκοντες ειναι σοφοι, ΕΜΩΠΑΝΘΗΣΑΝ.

“Professing themselves to be wise,” &c.

In the preceding observations I have remarked, that while a large section of professing Protestantism is going into alliance with Ritualism and ecclesiastical Idolatry, another large section is giving itself over to “philosophic lies.” There perhaps never was a period to which the solemn words, “professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,” apply more forcibly than to the present. And although

folly may not now be esteemed folly, yet they who use the Scripture and walk by faith will remember that there is an hour coming when the madness of those who spurn the sure records of Revelation will be made manifest to all men ; at a time too when no place can be found for repentance, but when weeping and gnashing of teeth must remain as the result for ever.

A little while ago it was the general habit to inveigh strongly against the folly of former ages in theorising apart from facts, and in speculating about the original causes of things and the essential nature of things, and so obtruding themselves into a sphere beyond their knowledge and beyond their powers, instead of restricting themselves to a patient induction of facts, and limiting their enquiries and their conclusions thereby. The progress of physical science since the days of Bacon, has been ascribed to the habit of abandoning theoretic speculation for ascertainment of fact. However much a Christian might dread the well-known tendency of the human heart to exalt itself, as well as its disposition, under the plea of necessary duty, to bury itself in the things of earth, yet he would not throw any impediment in the way of those who addict themselves to the ascertainment and examination of natural facts. Take geology for an example ; God has not forbidden men to search out what they can find in this ruined earth. They may use their powers of inquisition, and they may avail themselves of what they find.

They may seek the gold or the silver, the coal or the lime, and if the facts which geological science supplies facilitates the attainment of the objects of their search, such knowledge is not forbidden.

No one, however, who understands the character of the human heart could be deceived into the belief that men could long be content with simply investigating and recording facts, or limiting themselves to the use of them. They form speculative opinions upon these facts—they seek to account for and to explain them. Hypotheses are formed; plausible suggestions offered; the mind becomes enamoured of its skill in conjecturing; the reign of Theory returns; and conclusions, based on hypothetical premises, are accepted as if they had the most demonstrated certainty. Geology affords a memorable example of this. No science ever boasted more of its being devoted to the examination of facts, and yet there is none in which theory and speculative hypotheses more abound. Would that this were our only charge. But it has done more than this. With premises, half at least of which are founded on assumption, not on proof, it draws conclusions that distinctly contradict the Scripture. It sets supposed facts, and its own *opinions* about facts, in direct opposition to the testimonies of the Word of God. This was done cautiously at first—the contradiction was said to be apparent, not real—it was covered over with smooth words; but now the mask is thrown aside, and it is openly said, and that

too by one who professes to teach in the name of Christ, that the words which God spake on Sinai are false; for that they are contradicted by geological facts.*

Yet awful as such an assertion is, it is well perhaps that the veil should be thrown aside, and the hideousness of the system be exposed. Can any one read what has for years been written respecting pre-Adamic creations, formations, and the like, without seeing that the statements of such writers are utterly at variance with those words which the lips of holiness and truth once uttered—"in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and ALL THAT IN THEM IS, and rested the seventh day?" I do not profess to have examined all the various theories of these writers, nor their arguments. I feel no more bound to do so than to read the discussions of the Schoolmen of the middle ages upon their famous question as to how many spiritual existences like angels could stand together on a point like that of a needle. Indeed such discussions are to my mind not more absurd, and infinitely less revolting, than

* The writer to whom I refer is the Rev. Baden Powell, Savilian Professor of Geometry in the University of Oxford. His words are these—"All inquirers, possessing at once a sound knowledge of geology, and capable of perceiving the undeniable sense of a plain circumstantial narrative, now acknowledge that the whole tenor of geology is in entire contradiction to the cosmogony delivered from Sinai; a contradiction which no philological refinements can remove or diminish; a case which no *detailed* interpretation can meet, and which can only be dealt with as a whole."

the disquisitions of modern writers about "physical evolution," as Professor Powell calls it, or the "progression of organic phenomena." * When you feel assured that men are arguing without data, you may well be absolved from the toil and painfulness of following out their speculations. Many of the questions about which geologists so dogmatically express their opinions, would require in order to be discussed aright, *divine* knowledge. For example they ought to be acquainted perfectly with the time and manner and circumstances of every general convulsion, and of every local convulsion, which, secretly or openly, *miraculously or otherwise*, has taken place from the beginning of the world up to the present hour. Will they pretend to be able to do this? They *may* perhaps pretend to do it. But shall we be so mad as to credit the pretension? So far from understanding about all the convulsions that have ever taken place, they even neglect and pass over unnoticed those that are known. Respecting the Flood and its effects, geologists have written and speculated much : but of the greatest of all recorded

* "I have elsewhere fully discussed this subject, and have there explained the only view which I think the case admits; in one word, that the narrative, as a whole, as it cannot be received as historical, may be regarded as *poetical*."—Powell, p. 304.

Surely Cardinal Newman's doctrine of "non-natural interpretation" is not more revolting than the calling that Law pronounced by the Apostle "holy, just, and true," which Jesus came to magnify in life and in death, poetry, *i.e.*, fiction—not avowed fiction either, but propounded as truth, and only now discovered to be falsehood by the aid of geological discovery.

convulsions (for the Flood although it desolated the earth is not said to have convulsed or shaken the earth) — of the chief of all recorded convulsions what geologist has said anything? They seem altogether to forget that wondrous hour when God in glory descended on Mount Sinai, and when He so shook the earth, that the shaking is even compared to that great future shaking of which it is said, “I will shake not the earth only, but also heaven.” Geologists have forgotten this. Again, will they affirm that they understand the extent of the change that took place upon the earth’s surface or upon the earth’s lower parts when it lost its paradisiacal condition? Can they say exactly what the paradisiacal condition of the whole earth was—how long the time that it retained that condition—what the degree of the development of creation before Adam sinned—what the laws of progress then were—how and to what extent the condition of the earth was altered when its paradisiacal state was exchanged for another? Can they tell how and to what extent the laws of animal life were altered when beasts which now prey on one another ate only the herb of the field? (See Gen. i.) And afterward, was no change effected in the laws physically affecting man, when his life which once might be nine hundred, was limited to seventy years? And if alterations the nature and extent of which they know not, were made in the laws affecting animal life, are they sure that no analogous changes were made in the laws of

geological development? Can they tell what sudden effects of ruin and of contortion known to angels, though not to men, may have visited the whole globe at the moment when the curse of death first entered through sin, and when God first pronounced those awful words, "Cursed be the ground for thy sake?" Some say that the inclination of the earth's axis to its orbit was caused then, and that there was no succession of seasons before. Such a thought is of course mere hypothesis. It might have been so, or it might not. But the very suggestion reminds us how little we know respecting things about which God has revealed nothing. God, who well knows the scepticism of the human heart, and who has appointed that His people should in all things walk by faith and not by sight, may, possibly, by an act of His own volition have caused all those appearances that perplex geologists, in order that He may prove who those are that are content to leave difficulties (if difficulties there be) unexplained, rather than to purchase their explanation, or pretended explanation, at the cost of surrendering the Word of God. God has never told us that His Word should never be seemingly contradicted by appearances. He has not told us that we comprehend how the world was made out of nothing. On the contrary, He has told us that "*by faith* we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen are not made of things which do appear." Knowledge of

physical truths is not exempted any more than the knowledge of spiritual truths from the universality of the sentence pronounced over all knowledge alike—"If any man think that he knoweth (*i.e.*, is fully acquainted with) anything, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know." Right knowledge is chiefly proved by a consciousness of its imperfectness. As respects all knowledge, we have as yet to take the place of children, not of men, and to say, "we know only in part." It is only when "that which is perfect is come"—when we are to know even as also we are known, that we shall be able to say, "that which was in part is done away." Shall we then venture, under any conceivable circumstances, to oppose our knowledge which, we know, is and must be partial and incomplete, to the sure testimonies of the word of God?—that word which He declares He has magnified above all His name. How far better to imitate the poor man, who, when told by the infidel that the whale could not have swallowed Jonah, for that its throat was too narrow, replied, "Sir, if God had said that Jonah had swallowed the whale, I would have believed it." A mariner, ignorant of the "mirage" and its effects, might marvel if he saw lands and cities presented to his view where he had expected to find open waters; but if he were confident in the truth of his compass and his chart he would go boldly on. And shall we show less confidence in the word of God? Shall we not boldly venture on its truth and treat every

appearance that seems to contradict it as a deceiving mirage?

The Word of God has distinctly revealed that death entered because of sin. It does not limit the word "death" to the death of men. It says "*death entered.*" Shall we then say with the geologist, that it was not so—that animals died before the Fall? Shall we say that the creation was not made to depend on Adam its head—to stand if he stood, and to fall if he fell? Shall we say that death and suffering and corruption are not in themselves abhorrent to the living God—that He can permit or cause them to exist where no sin is? All this we must admit if we abandon the Word of God to credit the doctrines of geology.

There are at present, I trust, few who would not tremble at the blasphemy of affirming that what God said at Sinai was false. He there tells us by His own solemn voice—that voice which shook the earth, and caused even Moses to quake, that "in six DAYS the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and *all that in them is*, and rested the seventh day." The words, "*all that in them is*," are definite and express. They include everything — ichthyosauri, and every other form of creature—animals extinct and animals not extinct, together with everything contained in or connected with every geological formation. The words are unlimited—they embrace all things. And as regards the word "*days*," let us beware of saying that "days" do not mean "days" when the ordin-

ance respecting the Sabbath day, and the definition "evening and morning" given in Genesis i. demonstrate so clearly that they are literal days. Every *week* that rolls over our heads, should rebuke the unbelief of those who teach otherwise.

Again, how can it be said that the first verse of the first of Genesis refers to a period previous to that of which the subsequent verses treat, when we find that the heavens, whose creation is mentioned in the first verse, are expressly said in the sixth and seventh verses to have been created on the second day? Does not this prove a correspondency between the first verse and the verses that follow, and show that the first verse contains a general announcement concerning that same creation respecting which the subsequent verses supply the detail? Geologists speak much about the creation of the earth, but are very silent respecting the creation of the firmament or heavens. Are they ignorant that the heavens were created on the second day, or does it perplex them to be obliged to carry out their evil theory, and to say that there were pre-Adamic heavens? *

* It is well that Geologists who have adopted any of these methods of reconciling geological statements (I will not say facts) with Scripture, should observe how Mr. Powell scoffs at the attempt. He says, "In a former Essay I have adverted to the question of discrepancies between science and the language of Scripture generally, and have referred more especially to that notable instance of it -the irreconcilable contradiction between the whole view opened to us by Geology, and the narrative of the Creation in the Hebrew Scriptures, whether as briefly delivered

Some too, in order to sustain their theories, have endeavoured to explain away the force of the word “*create*” as used in the first chapter of Genesis. It

from Sinai, or as expounded in Genesis. In the minds of *all competently informed persons* at the present day, after a long struggle for existence, the literal belief in the Judaical cosmogony, it may now be said, has died a natural death. Yet many are still haunted by its *phantom*, which perpetually disturbs their minds with apprehensions equally groundless on collateral points.

“Most rational persons now acknowledge the failure of the various attempts to reconcile the difficulty by verbal interpretation; they have learnt to see that the ‘six days of six thousand years,’ have, after all, no more correspondence with anything in Geology than with any sane interpretation of the text. And that the ‘immense period at the beginning’ followed by a recent literal great catastrophe and final reconstituted in a week, is, if possible, more strangely at variance with science, Scripture, and common sense.”
—*Powell*, p. 458.

Professor Powell quotes the following abominable passage from another writer and calls it “noble.”—“If without derogation of the Divine Power we may conceive the existence of such ministers (*viz.*, natural laws and secondary causes) and personify them by the term *nature*, we learn from the past history of our globe, that she has advanced with slow and stately steps, guided by the archetypal light, amidst the wreck of worlds from the first embodiment of the vertebrate idea under its old Ichthyic vestment, until it became arrayed in the glorious garb of the human form.”

In other words, all that we read in Genesis concerning the creation of Adam (who is emphatically termed by the Apostle the *first man*) is a lie; and the human form was a late creation, or rather evolution, slowly evolved through the myriads of ages out of (will they say it?) *eternal* (?) matter, through successive forms of monstrosity, till it reached the human form as now seen. May I ask, is this to go on evolving itself into some future unknown form of being? Is the evolution taking place still? Mr. Powell may deceive himself by imagining that he can own the Lord Jesus Christ and reject Moses and the Prophets. But he cannot. He who rejects and blasphemes what Moses wrote, rejects and blasphemes Christ—who set His seal to the authority of Moses and of all Old Testament Scripture. “If they will not believe Moses, neither will they believe though one rose from the dead.”

is no doubt true, that almost every word in every language is sometimes used in a sense less strict than its proper meaning requires. But as regards the Scripture, we cannot be too careful in remembering this rule, that every word is always to be taken in the very fullest sense it is capable of bearing, unless there be some limitation in the context, or in the connected circumstances by which it is distinctly restricted. The proper sense of בָּרָא in Hebrew and κτίζω in Greek, when applied to God, is “to create” in the sense in which we are accustomed to apply that word to the one great First Author of all things. It means to bring into existence by means of omnipotent power that which had no existence previously. What can more clearly determine the force of the word “create” as applied to God than the words already quoted from Heb. xi. ?—“By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.” Will the inventors of geological theories really bow to the simple meaning of these words?

The *external* evidence by which the authority of the Word of God is sustained is so perfect, that it may be confidently said that no honest mind could examine and reject it. When the *internal* evidence (evidence which believers only can estimate) is added, there is an accumulation of proof that is incapable of being exceeded. Shall we then reject the Word of God, and prefer to trust our own

opinions about facts, whether those facts be real or supposed? If we do, we prove ourselves unworthy of that Book, and of every other mercy which has been lavished on this guilty world. What else can be expected by such, except to find themselves in the place of "the adversaries" at the last, for whom remains only "a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation?"

Yet, fearful as is the impiety with which physical science has dared to assault the Word of the living God, it is not more terrible than the attempts which (with smoother words and fairer pretensions, pretensions that remind us of Judas betraying his Master with a kiss) are being made by the "Broad-Church" writers to undermine the Scripture, and to substitute the empty jargon of Pantheism for the Revelation of God. An example of this may be seen in a commentary on some of the Epistles, just published by Benjamin Jowett, M.A., Fellow of Balliol College, Oxford, and recently appointed by Lord Palmerston's government, Regius Professor of Greek in that University. Alas! what a fearful pre-eminence for Oxford. Its sanctioned teachers have recently led myriads into perdition through Popery; others of its accredited teachers will now lead myriads more into perdition through false philosophy and neological pantheism.

Apart from their more specific statements, the general tone of Mr. Jowett's volumes is most painful. There is perhaps less of that wearisome

superabundance of words, seeming to promise something great, but ending in nothing, which usually characterises all writers who have learned in the German school, but there is throughout the whole work a certain recklessness of statement which astounds one by the coolness (might I not say, effrontery?) with which it enunciates its new doctrines, careless of the degree in which they violate every feeling which both Scripture and fact have hitherto established in our hearts. Take for example the following sentence:—

“Mankind are not divided, into regenerate and unregenerate, but are in a state of transition from one to the other, or too dead and unconscious to be included in either.”—*Jowett*, vol. i. p. 185.)

We must therefore have been wrong in supposing that either St. Paul or St. John were regenerate, for according to Mr. Jowett no man is regenerate. All are in a state of transition. The Apostle Peter must have been quite mistaken when he used the perfect tense, and called himself and others *αναγεννημενοι*, *i.e.*, persons who had been born again. We have hitherto supposed that the Lord was not mistaken in dividing mankind into two classes, *viz.*, those born after the flesh as men, and those who are also born after the Spirit from above. We have hitherto supposed that all who do not belong to the latter class must of necessity belong to the first, and therefore be unregenerate. But now we are to believe that as

no men are regenerate, so also that no men are unregenerate. "Neither to the Jew, nor to the heathen, nor to the hypocrite, nor to the sensualist (says Mr. Jowett), will such a description (*i.e.*, of being unregenerate) refer." (*See p.* 184). Many, according to Mr. Jowett, are too bad to be unregenerate, which, if it means anything, means that they are too bad to be in that condition in which all the children of Adam, as such, necessarily are. It is vain to reason against statements like these. When a mind has abstracted itself into a region of its own, and discarded the thoughts, and words, and definitions, which all other men have sanctioned, it cannot be reasoned with. We do not argue on geometry with one who persists in ascribing to a circle the properties of a square, or who asserts that parallel lines can meet. If we think that such statements are made designedly for the sake of misleading or perplexing others, we feel indignant: if we think that the mind has bewildered itself and lost its ordinary powers of perception, we pity; but in neither case do we reason.* Yet what shall we say of one who, with a habit of mind like this, attempts to comment on the words of Scripture—words fixed, precise, and definite in their meaning, because "words taught of the Holy Ghost."

* A similar instance of this recklessness of statement occurs on page 64—"The heathen religions sprang up in an age prior to morality." Was there then no morality in the age of Noah? There was no idolatry when he left the ark and sacrificed to the Lord his God.

IDOLATRY is one of the subjects of which Mr. Jowett treats. We remember how the Apostle speaks of idolatry in Romans i., the very chapter on which Mr. Jowett professes to comment. In the Epistle to the Corinthians too, the Apostle says, that although an idol is to him and to all who have right Christian knowledge, *nothing*—nothing more than a piece of wood or stone, yet to all who in their consciences regard it as being something, it is something. Therefore, although in secret where the eye of God alone saw him, or in the presence of others who had received like grace with himself, the Apostle could with a good conscience eat that which others had consecrated to idols, yet if any worshipper of idols were present who said, “this has been consecrated to an idol,” or even if any weak brother were present who could not bring himself to regard the idol as nothing, in such a case the Apostle would refuse to eat. By refusing to eat, he would bear witness to the truth that “the earth was the Lord’s and the fulness thereof”—he would deter the weak brother from acting against his conscience and thereby entering the path of ruin—he would bear testimony to the idol-worshipper of his guilt, and of his danger. Was this accounting the idol as nothing? It was nothing *to him*; but it might be everlasting perdition to others. Does not the Apostle distinctly say that what is sacrificed to idols is sacrificed to *devils*, and that they who eat of that which is taken from an idol’s altar, do, thereby, have fellowship with devils?

Such is the teaching of Scripture. Contrast therewith the words of Mr. Jowett.

“An idol is nothing in the world,” says the Apostle. Yet “he that commits fornication, sins against his own body.” It is foolishness to bow to an idol : but immorality and licentiousness are real and essential evil. No mere outward act can make a man different from what he was before ; while no inward act can leave him the same after as before its performance. A belief about Jupiter or Hades is not necessarily inconsistent with truth and purity of life.” (*Jowett*, vol. i. p. 64.)

Can any meaning be put upon these words except this?—that idolatry is in itself nothing—mere pardonable folly, to be deprecated indeed because of the moral vice into which it leads, but in itself a mere outward act leaving a man after its commission just what he was before ; and that whether a man believed in the One living and true God, or whether he believed that Jupiter was God, it would not necessarily affect either truth or purity of life. Such is the sentiment of this passage. Need I contrast with this the testimony of Moses, and of the Prophets, and of the Apostles, and of the Lord Himself? Do *they* teach that a man may turn from the living God unto idols, and yet do nothing that is inconsistent with “truth and purity of life?” Is this what we should infer from the history of idolatry in whatsoever age or whatsoever region regarded? Would facts teach us that it was folly merely and not sin? But Mr. Jowett seems to despise the testimony both of Scripture and of fact, and may I not

also add, of common sense. He contrasts, for example, outward acts with inward, as if there could be outward acts, such as those of which he speaks, apart from inward. We were accustomed to think common sense taught us rightly that all rational agents are accustomed to deliberate both on means and end, and to make their selections before they act, and that consequently inward acts necessarily precede outward. It used to be thought, in Oxford at any rate, that Aristotle was not wrong in what he taught respecting *προαίρεσις*. But now it seems we are to awake from this dream. We are to believe that men deliberately make up their minds to turn from God to idols without their being under the responsibility of performing anything more than a mere outward act, making them no different from what they were before. And yet observe Mr. Jowett's inconsistency. "A belief," he says, "about Jupiter is not necessarily inconsistent with truth," &c. Is then "belief" an outward act? Is not "belief" an inward assent of the understanding on the ground of evidence presented? If then "belief" be an inward act, then according to Mr. Jowett's own showing, it must stamp a man morally; it must involve those consequences which, according to his own theory, "inward acts" do involve.

It is obvious that no one with the Scripture before him *could* write thus respecting Idolatry, without being aware that he is contradicting Scripture; and that he who so contradicts Scripture cannot regard

it as authoritative and infallible. This is clearly the case with Mr. Jowett. Not the most avowed infidel writers ever accused the Apostles and the Lord Jesus Himself of error more distinctly than does Mr. Jowett. Mr. Jowett's reverence for the Scripture is just that which some patronising admirer of Plato, or Confucius, or any such philosopher, might express respecting the Master whom they had honoured with their approval. There is no bowing to the Scripture as the sure record of Truth—no disposition to have himself or his words judged thereby. On the contrary, he sits in judgment upon *it*; and even when he condescends to praise it, it is as from an elevation which enables him to look down upon the Scripture as among the things beneath. Smooth words, but envenomed thoughts, characterise his writings. Horns as of a lamb were seen on that beast in whose voice John recognised the voice of the Dragon.

Let any who fears God read the following passages, and say whether I write too strongly in writing thus :

“Strictly speaking, the expectation of the day of the Lord was not a belief, but a necessity in the early church; clinging as it did to the thought of Christ, it could not bear to be separated from Him; it was His absence, not His presence, that the first believers found it hard to realise. ‘Yet a little while, and they did not see Him; but yet a little while and they would again see Him.’ Nor was it possible for them at once

to lay aside the material images in which the faith of prophets and psalmists had clothed the day of the Lord. We readily admit that they lingered around 'the elements of the law;' but we must admit also that the imagery of the prophets had a reality and fact to them which it has not to us, who are taught by time itself, that all these things 'are a shadow, but the substance is of Christ.' "—*Fowett*, vol. i., p. 98.

In this passage we are taught that "the faith of prophets and psalmists (who spake, be it remembered, as they were moved by the Holy Ghost) did, by material images comparable to the elements (the Apostle says 'beggarly elements') of the law, lead the minds of the early Church to shadows, not to truth;" and it is implied that the words of the Lord Jesus, "a little while," &c., had the same tendency.

Does any one doubt that it is thus intended to charge the Lord Jesus? Let him read the extract that follows:

"The great influence which this belief" (*i.e.*, respecting the near approach of the coming of Christ) "exercised on the beginnings of the Church, and the degree of influence which it still retains, render the consideration of it necessary for the right understanding of St. Paul's Epistles. Yet it is a subject from which the interpreter of Scripture would gladly turn aside. For it seems as if he were compelled to say at the outset, 'that St. Paul was mistaken, and that in support of his mistake he could appeal to the words of Christ Himself.' Nothing can be plainer than the meaning of those words, and yet they seem to be con-

tradicted by the very fact that, after eighteen centuries, the world is as it was. . . . The surprise that we naturally feel, when the attention is first called to this singular discrepancy between faith and experience, is greatly lessened, by our observing that even the language of Scripture is not free from inconsistency." *Jowett*, vol. i., pp. 96, 97.*

* The mode in which Mr. Jowett speaks of all the Apostles and their co-workers, especially of the Apostle Paul, is most inexpressibly revolting, and shews that he has no notion of what Apostolic inspiration means: thus he speaks of St. Paul as "wavering between opposite views or precepts in successive verses" (vol. i., p. 291); as one of whom we cannot "pretend to estimate whether in the modern sense of the term he was capable of weighing evidence." (p. 299). He, St. Paul, had "a kind of subtilty of moderation." (p. 301). According to Mr. Jowett's hypothesis, St. Paul must at one time have "preached Christ according to the flesh, that is, more in a Jewish and less in a spiritual manner, and that, no longer back than on his last visit to the Corinthian Church" (p. 13); but afterward he must "have laid aside more and more the garb of Judaism, the weak and beggarly elements of the law" (p. 7), which garment he is supposed to have worn when he wrote his earlier Epistles. When he wrote his Epistle to the Thessalonians, Mr. Jowett regards him as more advanced; yet even then he was entirely in error about the coming of the Lord.

He speaks of St. John as "combining gentleness with vehemence, almost with fierceness;" of St. Peter, as "the captain of the Apostles, and yet wanting in the very qualities necessary to constitute a leader." Of St. James he says, "living, according to Hegesippus, the life of a Nazarite; praying in the Temple until his knees became hard as a camel's, and so entirely a Jew as to be unknown to the people for a Christian; a picture, which though its features may be exaggerated, yet has the trace of a true resemblance to the part which we found him acting in the Epistle to the Galatians."

What part?—when he gave to St. Paul the right hand of fellowship? Surely Mr. Jowett does not mean to identify James with the evil and folly of those who went down from Jerusalem to Antioch. We might just as well say that St. Paul was identified with the evils of the Corinthians, Galatians, or any of those over whom he watched in the Lord.

There is nothing in the context of the chapter from which these extracts have been made that diminishes—on the contrary, everything that is said tends to add strength to the charge of mistake and inconsistency in the teaching both of St. Paul and of the Lord Jesus Himself. What then becomes of the Scripture? There would be nothing that would deserve the name of “Holy Scripture.” There would be no certain record of truth. Better be a Deist, and say that God had granted no revelation, than to say that the God of Truth had sent a revelation that was untrue. There could be no salvation if Mr. Jowett’s principles were true. To suppose that the Holy Son of God could mistake and teach error, is to suppose that He could sin—and what becomes of salvation then?

To refute these most fearful statements (might I not use a far stronger term?) is not my present object. They will refute themselves to every rightly-ordered heart. But I may observe, in passing, that never probably was a charge of such tremendous import supported by reasons so utterly empty and vain. It is perfectly untrue that either the Lord Jesus or His Apostles ever taught that His Advent in glory was close at hand in the sense supposed by Mr. Jowett. On the contrary, the Lord Jesus in many of His parables and prophetic instructions expressly sought to correct the impression that He was at that time about to be revealed in glory. Thus in Luke xix. we read that when His disciples,

as they drew nigh to Jerusalem, thought that the kingdom of God would immediately appear, He spake a parable to correct this thought, telling them that He was as one who was going into a far country to receive for Himself a kingdom and to return; and that during His absence, which in the corresponding parable of Matthew is distinctly described as "LONG," His servants were to be occupied in trading with their talents. Was this to teach that His advent should be immediate? Do not the words in Matthew, "after a *long time* came the Lord of those servants and reckoned with them," teach the very reverse? Again, if we refer to the most lengthened of His prophecies, viz., that recorded in Matthew xxiv., we find that when His disciples enquired respecting "His coming and the end of the age," (*αιωνος*), as supposing that those events were nigh and synchronised with the coming destruction of the Temple of which He had just before spoken, the Lord Jesus corrects their error, and tells them that the approaching wars and commotions that were to result in the destruction of Jerusalem and of the Temple, were *not* signs of the end. "When ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars, see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end (*i.e.*, the end of the age respecting which they had asked) is NOT YET. The same statement is found in Luke xxi. "The end is NOT immediate." Is this to teach that His Advent was instantly to be expected? And as regards the text,

“This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled,” Mr. Jowett ought to be, and no doubt is, well aware that both דור in Hebrew, and γενεα in Greek, are constantly used like the word “age” without restriction as to time, indicating a period defined by moral characteristics, and not by limitation of time. Thus we say, “an iron age;” a “golden age;” and in the same sense, a “perverse and crooked generation,” or a “righteous generation;” in which former sense the word “generation” is applied by Moses to Israel during the whole period of their perversity, that is to say, from his own time to that yet future time, when they shall “convert, and be healed;” a period which has already measured well nigh four thousand years. To say an “evil age,” or an “evil γενεα” are equivalent expressions. Our Lord therefore in answering His disciples’ question respecting the end of “the age,” teaches them that the rebellious and stubborn generation then dominant in Israel and the earth, and which stamped upon the age its moral characteristic of evil, should not pass away and be succeeded by the new generation whom men should call “priests of the Lord and ministers of their God,” until all the things of which He spake in this prophecy should be fulfilled. The very object, therefore, of the passage is, to teach that many events, which at that time the disciples expected not, were to occur, before His Advent in glory should terminate the history of the generation of the ungodly.

In like manner the Apostle Paul expressly warns the Thessalonians against being deceived by false expectations respecting the immediate advent of the Lord. "That day shall not come except there come THE Apostasy (ἡ ἀποστασία) first, and that man of sin be revealed," &c. "Let no man deceive you by any means." Both St. Paul and St. Peter not only spoke frequently of their own death, but referred also to what should take place after their death, and described the evil of the latter days. And that closing book of Scripture which emphatically says, "the time is at hand;" "behold I come quickly;" is the very book which gives us the fullest prophetic detail respecting certain events which were to come to pass before the end should come. Never therefore, I repeat, was a charge of such awful moment so groundlessly made.

It is true indeed that faith, which, as "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen," can realise as present that which is absent, can and should realise as close at hand that which in another sense is waited for with long patience. The Advent of the Lord Jesus in glory is, on God's part, His *next* great act of manifested intervention in the things of earth, and, to the widowed and sorrowing Church, is the one great object of anticipation and hope. In this sense faith ever looks on it as "drawing nigh," but this is a very different thing from the sense spoken of by Mr. Jowett.*

* As regards St. Paul saying in the First Epistle to the Thessa-

We cannot be surprised that a writer who hesitates not to accuse the Lord Jesus and His Apostles of error, should reject the foundation doctrines of our holy faith. Although *facts* as well as Scripture teach us that infants who personally have not sinned, are nevertheless born inheritors of Adam's corruption, and suffer and die in consequence of what Adam did, yet Mr. Jowett scorns the thought of being involved in the guilt and in the consequences of another's transgression. He equally scorns the thought of any being accepted in the value of Another's righteousness: vicarious sacrifice and satisfaction by atoning death are words which he would, if he could, strike from the nomenclature of Christianity. In vain the Prophet says, "He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities; and by His stripes we are healed . . . It pleased Jehovah to bruise Him, and to put Him

Ionians—"We which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord"—surely Mr. Jowett must be well aware of the "corporate" use of the word "*we*" and "*ye*"—constant not only in Scripture but in every other book, every speech, every conversation. Do not Englishmen continually say "we conquered at Crecy or at Waterloo," or "we shall feel the effects of this a hundred years hence," without any one dreaming that they are speaking of themselves as individuals? Any member of a corporate body may, if he please, sink his individuality and speak of himself as identified with that body. St. Paul speaks of himself as identified with the Church of God.

The words of our Lord to which Mr. Jowett refers—"a little time," &c., do not refer to His second advent, but to His seeing His disciples again after His resurrection. A little while hence and I shall die; again a little while and I shall rise from the grave and see you again. The grave is the appointed way of my leaving the world and going to the Father.

to grief . . . Jehovah hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." In vain the Apostle says, "As by the disobedience of one man many have been constituted (*κατεσταθησαν*) sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be constituted righteous." Scripture has no value to Mr. Jowett, except so far as it accords with his own self-formed notions. If Apostles could write erroneously in one case, why not in another? "Satisfaction" for the sins of believers by Christ's atoning death and "sacrifice," are words which Mr. Jowett loathes. See his words, vol. i. p. 474. "Whether then we employ the term sacrifice or satisfaction, or exhibition of divine justice, the moment we pierce beneath the meaning of the words, theological criticism seems to detect something that is irreconcilable with the truth and holiness of God." Yet he does not deny that the Apostles used these words, or words equivalent in meaning. Mr. Jowett apologises for the Apostles. "It must be remembered," he says, "that the Apostles were Jews; they were so before their conversion, they remained so afterwards in their thoughts and language; they could not" (observe the words "could not," used of the Apostles as inspired by the Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven) "lay aside their first nature or divest themselves at once of Jewish modes of expression. Sacrifice and atonement were leading ideas of the Jewish dispensation; without shedding of blood was no remission." [Observe how this great and everlast-

ing truth is treated as if it were a mere temporary ordinance.] “In thinking of the death of Christ and the fulfilment of which He spoke, it was natural to them to think of Him as a ‘sacrifice’ and ‘atone-ment’ for sin. To Him bear all the prophets witness, as well as the types of the law and the history of the Jewish people.”* [According to Mr. Jowett, they bear false witness.]

“The Apostles lived amid the temple sacrifices; the smoke of their offerings, even in the city of Jerusalem under its Roman governor, as of old in the wilderness, still went up before the Lord; the carcasses of dead animals strewed the courts of the temple. It would be a sight scarcely tolerable to us; neither, if at the present moment we could witness it in remote parts of the world, could we bear to think of what we saw as typical of the Gospel. Nor, indeed, do we think of what we are saying when we speak of Christ offered for the sins of men; the image is softened by distance, and has lost its original associations. We repeat it as a sacred word, hallowed by the usage of Scripture, and ennobled by its metaphorical application. *The death of Christ is not a sacrifice in the Levitical sense*; but what we mean by the word sacrifice, is the death of Christ.”† —Vol. ii. p. 477.

* Jowett, vol. ii. p. 475.

† The italics are mine. Mr. Jowett denies that Christ's death was in any sense a sacrifice in the Levitical sense, *i.e.*, expiatory by vicarious death of the sins of others. Sacrifice is a word that, according to Mr. Jowett, can only be applied to Christ in relation to His “self-renunciation”—“pure love”—“entire resignation.” We see then “not the sacrifice, nor the satisfaction, nor the ransom, but the greatest moral act ever done in this world.” *Jowett*, ii. p. 48x. If this be not an entire rejection of the foundation doctrine of our holy faith, it would be difficult to say what could be!

“After the notion of the priesthood passed away in the Reformed Churches, that of the atonement and sacrifice, which during so many centuries had been supported by it, was still retained, because it seemed [observe the word “seemed”] to rest on a Scriptural foundation.” Vol. ii. p. 477.

But I will not quote further. The sum of the whole is, that the Apostles (how can it be wondered at considering they are Jews?) were utterly mistaken in their thoughts about sacrifice and atonement. The Epistle to the Hebrews, seeing that it teaches what Mr. Jowett rejects, viz., that the sacrifice of Christ was a sacrifice in the “Levitical sense,” is treated with as little respect as if it were a fable. We must arise into higher and nobler conceptions than are found amidst these Jewish rudiments. The teachers of these later days can lead us into a wiser and better way. Such is the sentiment of these volumes. Would that Mr. Jowett would remember what the Scripture says respecting those teachers of the latter day who gainsay the words of the Apostles. Does it speak of them as true shepherds? No! It speaks of them not as shepherds, but as wolves—not as lights from heaven, but as “wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.”

All the writers of this school agree in rejecting atonement *by blood-shedding*; although they have different ways of explaining what they mean by atonement. The greater part of them, however, like Mr. Erskine and others who have trodden the

same path before, seem to believe that the Son of God by the fact of taking human nature upon Himself (some add, “and by carrying it through sufferings and death”) did thereby reconcile human nature to God. Now in the first place the Scripture never speaks of human nature or any such abstraction being reconciled; it speaks not of an abstract nature, but of *persons* (viz., all who believe) being reconciled, and that not by the fact of incarnation, but by atoning death on the Cross. In the second place, it is not true that all men became united to Christ from the fact of His having assumed human nature. The possession of a common nature does not involve union. Two vines may have a common nature—they are both vines, yet they are not united unless the branches of one are grafted into those of the other. Yet some have not hesitated to revive in support of their doctrine the absurd fiction of the Realists, and by imagining the existence of an abstract common nature, to teach the union of all the individuals that possess that nature. But it is all a fiction. As there is no reconciliation except through the atoning blood of the Cross, so there is no union with Christ except through the Holy Ghost, and that is given only to them that believe. Then, and not till then, we can speak of union.*

* One of the texts sometimes referred to in support of the doctrine of reconciliation being effected by the *incarnation* simply, is Heb. ii. 16. Οὐ γὰρ ἀγγέλων ἐπιλαμβάνεται, ἀλλὰ σπέρματος Ἀβραὰμ ἐπιλαμβάνεται—thus rightly rendered by Montanus, “Non enim videlicet angelos apprehendit, sed semen

Would that Mr. Jowett and others might bethink themselves ere it is too late—would that they might escape from the meshes of the net in which the great Enemy of souls has entangled them. The hopeless feature in their case is their contempt for

Abrahæ apprehendit." The word *ἐπιλαμβάνομαι* means to grasp or lay hold of in the way of help or succour—"he taketh not hold of angels, but of the seed of Abraham he taketh hold." There is no mention here of an abstract nature being taken hold of in the way of deliverance, on the contrary it is said that "he taketh hold" only of persons definitely described as "the seed of Abraham," *i.e.*, the family of faith; for "they that are of faith the same are the children of Abraham." See Gal. iii. 7. In order to extend this succour to them He not only became incarnate, *but also died and rose again*—all which things are shown by the context to be involved in that succour to which the word *ἐπιλαμβάνεται* refers.

For the use of the word *ἐπιλαμβάνομαι* in the sense referred to see Luke ix. 47, and Mark viii. 23. The following remarks to be found in the "Critici Sacri" are well worthy of remembrance: "Hæc non est vis verbi *ἐπιλμβανεσθαι*, ut significet *assumere in unionem personæ*; quin *ἐπιλμβανεσθαι* proprie est apprehendere, unde factum est ut etiam opitulari significet: Sirac. iv. 12, *καὶ ἐπιλμβανεται* (Sapientia nimirum) *τῶν ζητούντων αὐτήν*—opitulatur quærentibus ipsum . . . Atqui si *ἐπιλμβανεσθαι σπέρματος Αβρααμ* est *assumere naturam humanam*, idem videbitur probasse per idem; nam *feri nobis per omnia similem et assumere naturam nostram* non videntur re sed verbis tantum differre. Quod si *ἐπιλμβανεται* pro *ἀντιλμβανεται* ponitur omnia quadrant; ut hæc sit mens Apostoli, *Christus non venit redempturus Angelos, sed Homines*; itaque oportuit Christum hominibus esse similem, fratribus nimirum suis: nam semen Abrahæ hic sunt credentes; porro soli fideles sunt *Christi fratres*. Sic supra collegit, *Quoniam παῖδια κεκοινωνήκε αἵματος καὶ σαρκος, ipsi similiter eorum particeps factus est*. Ergo *παῖδια, ἀδελφοί, σπέρμα Αβρααμ, ἁγιαζόμενοι*, iidem sunt, credentes nempe. . . . Uno verbo *ἐπιλμβανεσθαι* est eorum qui ceciderunt et qui manu prehensi erigendi sunt ex lapsu."—Cameron.

Grotius observes, "Hebræa *יָחַז* et *רָחַז* et *שָׁפַז* solent verti per *ἐπιλμβανεσθαι*. Omnia autem hæc *manus injectionem* signi-

the Word of God. Where that is revered there is hope, but where that is scorned or treated as the word of man, there seems to be hopelessness for ever. Often have I seen the blessed effect of reverence for the Scripture. Some time ago, I was called to see a friend visited by a fatal malady. He had been educated at Oxford; his religious life had been one of great uncertainty and doubt, yet he always retained a reverence for Holy Scripture. He did not think with Mr. Jowett, that "the plastic nature of language is an element of uncertainty in the interpretation of Scripture." I went to a distant place to see him. When he entered the room into which I had been shewn, he looked on me with a look of the deepest agony, a look which I shall not soon forget, and said: "I am a dying man as you see; but I am not fit to die." In vain I spoke to him of forgiveness of sins through faith in the blood of the Lamb; his mind had been prejudiced against the simplicity of the Gospel, and I left him un comforted. Still, however, I could not regard his case as hopeless, for he retained his reverence for the Word of God. A short time after, whilst that part of John was being read to him which speaks of the Lord Jesus being raised on the Cross as "Moses lifted up the Serpent in the wilderness," as he listened to those words followed by the verse, "God so loved

ficant: quomodo Græca vox sumitur Marci viii. 23. Luc. ix. 47; xiv. 4; xxiii. 26. Act xxiii. 19. Sic Hebr. viii. 9. Solent autem manu apprehendi qui e servitute aut vinculis educuntur.

the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life," he suddenly said, "Read that passage to me again." It was read to him again. He said "It is enough, I see where salvation is now." He received peace through faith in the blood of the Lamb—a peace which never left him, and about three weeks after he died happily in the faith of Jesus.

It is a simple testimony to Christ as the antitypical Serpent of Brass that is needed in Oxford and throughout the land, wherever Ritualism and Rationalism have breathed their pestilential breath. Everlasting satisfaction for sin original and actual by means of sacrifice—that sacrifice which was once and for ever finished when Christ offered Himself on the Cross, and whereby all who believe, are, as to acceptance, perfected for ever—this is the great cardinal truth of the Gospel of God. Personal faith, however, not ritual ordinances, is the means whereby the sinner becomes connected therewith. They who believe not have no interest in that sacrifice—their sins have not been borne by a substitute—no satisfaction has been made for their guilt. Acceptance through the one sacrifice pertains only to them that believe. Justifying faith is simply reliance [*fiducia* not *fides* merely]—reliance on God as pardoning and accepting through the blood of Jesus all who cast themselves on Him thereby. Reliance may vary in its degrees—we may lean on another more or less

completely. This may affect our stability, our assurance, our comfort, our peace: but he who leans, even though imperfectly, on God through the redemption that is in Christ, and confesses the name and the BLOOD of Jesus, is declared by the Scripture to be "known of God" in the value of that blood and of that holy name for ever.

There are some, I know, in Oxford who recognise the truth of those words, "There is one only name given among men whereby we must be saved." They must, I am sure, be alarmed and horrified at the sentiments and doctrines now spreading around them. May they arouse themselves to an adequate sense of the danger, and be faithful. May they ponder those solemn words, "Whosoever bringeth not this doctrine, receive him not into thy house, neither bid him God speed, for whosoever biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds."

This is an hour which demands that every one should unequivocally declare on which side he is. If Baal be God, serve Baal: but if Jehovah, serve Him. If those things to which I have referred in Mr. Jowett's writings be truth, own it; but if not, if Christ and the Apostles and their testimonies be true, then let us follow them at every risk, at the cost of breaking any tie, of resigning any advantage, of renouncing the most cherished friendship. Christ said that His truth should come as a sword into the household,—there never was a time that more distinctly verified that word.

We must beware of deceiving ourselves with the thought that the evil is too great, the statements too revolting, to spread extensively. Experience contradicts this. Experience shews that there is no extravagance too great, no folly too monstrous, for the human heart, under certain circumstances, to welcome. God can, and He has said that at last He will, send on men "strong delusion, that they should believe a lie." Is not half Christendom at this moment content to receive, as if it were a revelation from heaven, that astounding falsehood that the Virgin Mary was, like the Holy One of God, sinless? And although the statements of Mr. Jowett's book avowedly contradict the Scripture—although they are condemned by every confession of faith (and they are many) that Protestantism has ever promulgated—although they have shocked and outraged the feelings of every real Christian amongst us, yet does this prevent the government of the day, having too, for one of its most influential members, Sir George Grey (from whom other things might have been expected), appointing Mr. Jowett to one of the most honourable offices in Oxford? It will be pleaded no doubt in excuse, "We look for secular competency for secular offices, and education is a secular work; with religious opinions we have no concern." Will governors indeed say this? Will they say that the world is for man, but that Heaven is left to God, and that whatever promotes human progress here must be

encouraged, however antagonistic to that which is revealed from above? If secular competency alone is to be regarded, perhaps we may soon find our best Greek scholars among Brahmins, or Mahomedans, or Jews; or some learned Voltaire may arise, who may not hesitate, for the sake of a Fellowship or Professorship at Oxford, to sign any Articles in a non-natural sense. Alas! this is not idle irony. The result I have pointed out is too clearly that toward which the dominant principles of the day are tending.

Some, dreading the advance of latitudinarianism, are retiring into the strongholds of Popery, whilst others (and among them not a few real Christians) terrified by the progress both of ritualism and infidelity, are endeavouring to content themselves with principles and with positions which they know to be connected with much that is wrong, but which, nevertheless, they tolerate, because they stand in favorable contrast with the fearful developments of more advanced evil around them. How frequently has some one section of society, often insignificant as to numbers, been urged on by Satan into some desperate pre-eminence of evil, in order that lesser deflections from the path of truth might appear no deflections, or rather that they might appear bright with light when viewed in contrast with the black darkness. The entrance of a cavern, although it may be very dark, appears light itself in contrast with the intensity of darkness within. If Protest-

antism in its earlier days had been accustomed to judge of its position more with reference to the light towards which it was advancing, and less with reference to the darkness from which it was withdrawing, it would have formed a different estimate of many things ; and many of the evils which we now deplore would never have appeared within its borders. May all “ who have ears to hear ” learn the lesson while there is yet time, and ceasing from every form of human tradition cleave only to **THE SCRIPTURE**.

What honour can be greater than to be permitted to maintain its pure testimonies against these deceiving falsehoods, which we know must arise and magnify themselves for a season before the great end comes ? “ This know,” said the Apostle, “ that in **THE LAST DAYS** perilous times shall come.” “ Ye have heard that **THE Antichrist** shall come.” Scripture and fact alike bear witness to the giant advance of evil. They who are wise will take heed to the warning, and gird themselves for the conflict.

The following extract supplies another remarkable instance of the contempt with which the writings of the Apostle Paul are treated by Mr. Jowett. Mr. Jowett’s words are as follows :—

“ The Apostle is about to speak of Adam, the type of sin, as Christ is the type of righteousness. The

sin of Adam is the sin of man, as the righteousness of Christ is the righteousness of man. But how is the fact of sin reconcilable with the previous statements of the Apostle :—‘ Where there is no law there is no transgression ’ ? Such is the doubt which seems to cross the Apostle’s mind, which he answers ; first by saying that there ‘ was sin in the world before the giving of the law ’ (though he had said before, ‘ where there is no law there is no transgression ’) and then as if aware of his apparent inconsistency, he softens his former expression into — ‘ sin is not imputed where there is no law. ’ ”—*Jowett*, vol. ii., p. 155.

Let us examine this paragraph. The first sentence is, “ *The Apostle is about to speak of Adam, the type of sin, as Christ is the type of righteousness.* ” This surely is a strange use of the word “ type. ” Adam, a “ type ” of sin ! The Scripture (and that in the very chapter on which Mr. Jowett is commenting) speaks of Adam being a type of Christ—*τυπος του μελλοντος* ; and we can well understand how, as a federal head, Adam could be the type of another and greater federal head ; but where does Mr. Jowett learn that Adam was a type of sin ? He adds that Christ was a “ type ” of righteousness. Christ was indeed the living embodiment of righteousness ; but in what sense can He be called “ the type ” of righteousness ? It used to be thought that a type was something less than the thing typified, and that Christ was the great *antitype* of all types of righteousness. This, I expect, is the first time He was ever spoken of as a “ type ” of righteousness. We

are not at liberty to invent a nomenclature of our own on Scriptural subjects.

The next statement is, "*The sin of Adam is the sin of man, as the righteousness of Christ is the righteousness of man.*" The Apostle does indeed state that the sin of Adam is the sin of man. Would that Mr. Jowett received that statement; he would not then scorn the doctrine of imputed sin. But the Apostle does not say that the righteousness of Christ is the righteousness of man; for in that case all men would be saved, and this Mr. Jowett and those who teach with him seem to believe. The Apostle says that the righteousness of Christ is the righteousness of *believing* men—that is a very different statement, involving a difference that is infinite and everlasting.

The next sentence is, "*But how is the fact of sin reconcilable with the previous statements of the Apostle: 'Where there is no law there is no transgression'?* Such is the doubt which seems to cross the Apostle's mind," &c. In other words, the Apostle had perplexed himself by his own inconsistency. Such is the reverence with which *he* is spoken of who used words taught by the Holy Ghost—*λογοις διδακτοις Πνευματος Ἁγίου* (1 Cor. ii. 13),—who said, "If any man think himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord." Whatever the Apostles said or wrote avowedly under the direction of Christ, in *that* they were infallible. When, on other occasions, they simply expressed

their own judgments, as in that memorable instance 1 Cor. vii. 25, where St. Paul expressly states that he was not speaking with the authority of Christ, they were not infallible—though even then, who would mistrust their judgment? The very fact that when the Apostle states his own judgment, he carefully guards against its being supposed that it was anything more authoritative, proves that all the rest of his instructions, where no such exception is made, are to be regarded as having the full authority of Christ. In their private walk Apostles might err. Peter erred at Antioch. He did not, however, pretend that he had the Lord's authority for his conduct there. But when he wrote apostolically, as one of the legislators of the church of God, he did claim to write with the authority of Christ. This obvious difference between the Apostles when acting avowedly in the name and Spirit of Christ, and when not so acting, Mr. Jowett seems utterly to ignore.

“Such is the doubt which seems to cross the Apostle's mind, which he answers by saying, that there ‘was sin in the world before the giving of the law’ (though he had said before, ‘where there is no law there is no transgression,’) and then, as if aware of his apparent inconsistency, he softens his former expression into ‘sin is not imputed where there is no law.’” Here it is distinctly implied that the Apostle had contradicted himself, yet what can be more plain, what more consistent than the Apostle's statement? He had not said,

where there is not THE Law (*i.e.*, the Law as promulgated to Israel at Sinai) there is no transgression. He had said (and what can be more obviously true?) that there can be no such thing as personal transgression except there be some commandment or law against which to transgress. How could Adam or Eve have transgressed, if no commandment had been given them? Transgression would in such a case be impossible. The same may be said of the Antediluvian world. Had they no commandments given them through Enoch, Noah, and others? Did not the Spirit of God strive with them through the testimony of His servants; and had they not also around them the works of God's hand bearing perpetual witness "to His eternal power and divinity?" It is perfectly true therefore, that where no law is, there is no personal transgression; and the Apostle only repeats the same truth in an altered form when he says in the fifth chapter, that "sin (in the sense of personal transgression) is not registered or set down in the account against us (*οὐκ ἐλλογείται*) where there is no law." I have rendered *ἐλλογέω* to register or set down in an account, not only because it is the strict meaning of the word, (as our translators have rendered it in the only other place where it occurs, *viz.*, Philemon 18, *τοῦτο ἐμοὶ ἐλλογα*—"put that to my account") but also because "impute" is the rendering which should be preserved for *λογίζομαι* as used in Rom. iv., and because "impute" has in our theological language a

technical and restricted sense in which "imputed" sin is contrasted with transgression personally committed: and so applied, λογιζομενον must be regarded as contrasted with ελλογουμενον.

In human arrangements we find that there is not only the *culpa* which attaches to actual transgression, but often the *reatus* which attaches to those who have not personally transgressed. A parent may be attainted for rebellion. All his family are involved in the consequences. They lose their honours and their heritage. In the passage before us the Apostle teaches us, that although in the Divine arrangements, sin, in the sense of personal transgression, is not recorded against any who have not broken some law or rejected some light given to them by God, yet the fact that death reigns even over those "who had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression," that is, by breaking a recognised commandment (infants and idiots are such persons)—the fact that death rests as a penalty on those who have never *personally* sinned, is an evidence that they are punished in consequence of a sin committed by another, even by Adam. Is not this "imputed" sin? Nevertheless, all who die as infants, or as idiots, and all who die as believers, are accepted in Another's righteousness. "As by the disobedience of one man many have been constituted (κατεσταθησαν, it is a forensic term) sinners, so by the obedience of One shall many be constituted righteous."

There is no difficulty in the interpretation of Romans v. 12, if the verse be strictly translated: "Therefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men on the ground that all sinned," observe, not on the ground that they had personally sinned (for they had not), nor on the ground that they would sin, nor on the ground that they would be born with depraved natures, but on the ground that they sinned (*ἡμαρτον*—the reference of all the aorists in this verse being synchronous) when the first man, their representative sinned. The statement of the 19th verse is similar. "As by the disobedience of one man many *were constituted* sinners"—this verse like the 12th referring to the legal "reatus" which attached, the moment Adam had sinned, to all his natural descendants.

The $\epsilon\phi' \omega$ of verse 12, is as much a legal or forensic expression as *καθιστημι* or *δικαιωω*. It may be used either of a stipulation referring to the future, as when one person covenants to do so and so, on condition that ($\epsilon\phi' \omega$) the other shall do so and so: * or it may be used of an arrangement that *has taken effect*, as when we say, "You are deprived of your inheritance on the ground of ($\epsilon\phi' \omega$) your forefathers having been guilty of treason." In the first case we commonly translate $\epsilon\phi' \omega$ "*on condition that*;" in the latter case, "*on the ground that*." Compare the

* Many examples will be found of this in Thucydides.

use of ἐφ' ὧγε and ἐφ' ὅτῳ in the following passages :—*Εἰ γὰρ ἐγενον ἐφ' ὧγε διατελεῖν διευτυχῶν αἰ,* *si enim eâ lege natus es ut perpetuâ felicitate fruaris :* (Menand. ap. Plut.) and, *ἐμε μηδεν ἐχεις ἐφ' ὅτῳ τουτο ποιησεις*—"You have no ground on which to do this to me."

This verse, therefore, as well as the 19th, contains a clear announcement of what has been theologically called *imputed* sin—to be distinguished from "imparted corruption," and this has been always done wherever the proper accuracy of theological language has been observed.

Take for example the following excellent observations of Dr. Owen.—Speaking of the text, "By one man sin entered," &c., he observes : "It is hence manifest what sin it is that the Apostle intends, namely, the actual sin of Adam ; the one sin of that one common person, whilst he was so. For although the corruption and depravation of our nature doth necessarily ensue thereon, in every one that is brought forth actually in the world by natural generation, yet is it the guilt of Adam's actual sin alone, that rendered them all obnoxious unto death upon the first entrance of sin into the world."—*Owen on Justification*, p. 324. See also the words of the 9th Article as amended at Westminster in 1643, when the Westminster Assembly, following apparently the Confession of Augsburg, proposed to alter the Article thus :—

"Original sin standeth not in the following of

Adam, as the Pelagians do vainly talk ; but, *together with his first sin imputed*, it is the fault and corruption," &c.* Thus there is on the one hand, first, imputed sin, whereby in virtue of what Adam did, all are brought under condemnation ; secondly, there is "imparted corruption ;" thirdly, actual transgression ; whilst there is on the other hand Imputed Righteousness, whereby *all believers* are in virtue of what Christ did, brought into acceptance ; secondly, there is an imparted holy nature called in Scripture "the new man ;" thirdly, there are fruits of righteousness acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. It cannot be too carefully remembered, that as the condemnation was complete on the ground of imputation alone, so acceptance is complete on the ground of imputation alone. Consequences or concomitants are not to be confounded with causes. The importance of maintaining this distinction was abundantly shewn in the discussions at the Council of Trent. I do not indeed deceive myself by sup-

* The language of this Article even as amended by the Westminster Assembly, requires yet further correction. I have said in my pamphlet, "Appointments of God in Judgment and in Mercy, considered" (advertised at the end of present publication), that—

"It virtually makes Adam's sin and our corruption to be joint causes of our condemnation, and does not recognise our corruption as a penal consequence of Adam's first sin. Dr. Owen evidently discovered this error, and his statement (quoted above) is thoroughly Scriptural." (p. 16.)

I earnestly request that the subject may not be passed lightly over.

posing that any thing I can urge from Scripture will have any weight with Mr. Jowett, or with his friends, because they reject the authority of Scripture. Their proper,—their only straight-forward course would be to assail the evidences on which the authority of Scripture rests. It is not honourable, nor fair to their opponents to make it seem as if the dispute was about the *meaning* of Scripture, when it is really respecting the truth of the Scripture. For example, Mr. Jowett does not deny that the Scripture uses the word ἸΛΑΣΜΟΣ—he does not deny that the thought of appeasement or placation of wrath is involved in that word. He does not deny that such appeasement is both in the Old and New Testament represented as being the result of *Blood-shedding*: he admits that the doctrine is taught in Scripture, but he denies its truth.

Mr. Jowett may desire to regard the Scripture just as he would a valued human book—he may wish to be at liberty to esteem part of it true and part false, and so make his own selections. But this cannot be. The character of a human writer is not irrevocably gone because he may err in some of his statements. He does not pretend to be infallible—he does not assert that his words are Divine. But it is otherwise with the Scripture. The Scripture asserts its own infallibility—“THE SCRIPTURE CANNOT BE BROKEN.” The writings of the Apostle Paul are by the Apostle Peter pronounced to be SCRIPTURE; and Moses and the Prophets

are stamped with the authoritative recognition of the Lord Jesus Himself. If therefore the Scriptures be not what they pretend to be, then are they altogether to be cast out as a lie and a deceit. But it is not so—they are “the oracles” of the God of truth.

If this were acknowledged—if the Scriptures were owned as the infallible record of Truth, there would be no room for its being said that “all honest and good hearts,” and “human feelings revolt” at the idea of certain things which Scripture has revealed. Such words could find no place except where man is judging of his fellow man. These expressions of indignation in Mr. Jowett are called forth by what the Scripture reveals respecting the righteousness of the Divine Government as requiring expiation. Now, although I admit that there may be in the arrangements of the great Governor of Heaven and earth, things far too high for our finite and darkened understandings to grasp—indeed He has Himself said, “My ways are not as your ways, nor my thoughts as your thoughts;” yet still as to the immediate question which has called forth the expressions to which I have referred, *it is not true* that the notion of atonement by vicarious suffering is abstractedly abhorrent to the consciences of men. We read of a Legislator of old, who, having enacted a law which appointed to those who should commit a certain sin, the penalty of having both their eyes put out, found that his own son was the

first to commit the crime. He was deeply afflicted. He knew not what to do. He saw that the welfare of his people demanded, and that his own character demanded, that the honour of the law should be maintained. He therefore determined that his son should have *one* of his eyes put out; and that he himself, in order to spare his son and yet vindicate the law, would also submit to the like penalty. Did any one ever exclaim against this as abhorrent to the best feelings of the human heart? Then why exclaim against God? I do not of course refer to this incident in human history as an adequate illustration of the ways of God, or as if there were not far higher and weightier reasons that influenced His appointments for the redemption of His people: I merely use it to shew that vicarious atonement is not regarded among men as abhorrent to the best feelings of their nature. Surely it belongs to God alone to determine what is needful to the fitting manifestation of His holiness and of His love. Who is a fitting judge of what beseems God's holiness and glory, except God Himself? If there be difficulties in apprehending some of His ways, is it too much to expect of such as we, that we should wait and say in faith, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" Yet, as to the Cross, what difficulty is there in apprehending that there is nothing of which we can conceive, that could so marvellously magnify Divine Holiness and Divine Love? If there had been no love in the Father—

if *only* wrath had been there, and all the love had been in the Son, there might have been a difficulty. But who teaches this? Was it no love in the Father that caused Him not to spare His own Son? Did it cost the Father nothing to bruise that holy Son, to put Him to grief, to make His soul an offering for sin? The Divine holiness did indeed require 'ΙΛΑΣΜΟΝ *appeasement*,—that word cannot be blotted from the Scripture; but who provided the lamb for the offering? And is it not plain that every argument that Mr. Jowett employs against the vicarious suffering of Christ, might also be urged, in some form or other, against His suffering at all? The Scripture assigns an *adequate* reason for the sufferings of the Holy One, and we are satisfied. But on Mr. Jowett's principles, I do not see but that we must be driven at last to the ground of the Docetæ, and say that He merely *seemed* to suffer; or else deny His advent altogether.

And as regards the character of God, of which the writers of the Broad-Church talk so much, who are they that misrepresent it, they who say that the Cross magnified alike the holiness, the love and the grace of God—His wrath indeed against sin, but His love toward the sinner; or those who say that God after creating the world, and governing the world, and doing many things in the world, and appointing a futurity of existence to men in another world, *professed* to give a full written revelation of His will; but gave it so imperfectly and

with so many errors, that it cannot be trusted as a guide even though it *professes* to be able “to make the man of God perfect?” I ask, was there ever a greater misrepresentation of God than this, both as to His holiness and as to His love? If the Scriptures pretending to be the Scriptures of TRUTH do nevertheless deceive, it is a cruel deception indeed. But it is not so; His word is true and simple, and standeth fast for ever. It stands as the record indeed of holiness, but the record also of grace—grace that shall be found by all who reject not acceptance through the atoning blood and righteousness of ANOTHER.

On Romans II.

FEARFUL as the picture of Gentile evil which the Apostle had drawn in the preceding chapter was, yet there was one ear prepared to hear of that evil, not with sorrow but with joy, and to welcome the sentence of condemnation pronounced on every Gentile. It was the ear of the Jew—the ritual Jew. Without any real appreciation of the sin, without any feeling of pity towards the sinner, without one thought of thankfulness for the gospel of the grace of God, which alone could meet, and which was intended to meet, the depth of this iniquity, the ritual Jew, proud of his own fancied security, rejoiced in the degradation and ruin of others, because he found in it an opportunity for elevating himself.

It may seem strange, perhaps, that the Jew should so frequently be referred to, and the Jewish heart be so often addressed, in Epistles which the Apostles wrote to believers in Jesus. But we must remember how strong is the tendency of every heart to Judaize, *i.e.*, to mistake form for power, and substitute order and office for the presence of the Spirit of life and truth. In the early churches, moreover, even in those gathered from the Gentiles, Jewish converts abounded, who not only had strong educational prejudices themselves, but were being perpetually acted

on by the unconverted Jews around, whom they were anxious to conciliate and to please. And if a desire to propitiate Jewish feeling was able to warp for a season even Apostles from the path of rectitude—if even Peter and Barnabas were thereby induced to dissimulate, and to compromise the truth of the Gospel, we cannot wonder that poor weak Gentiles (many of them babes in Christ and very ignorant of God's word) should look up with awe and reverence to those who had so long been the people of Jehovah, and had had amongst them His word and the teaching of His holy Prophets, whilst they, the Gentiles, were living as aliens “without hope, and without God in the world.” Jewish influence, therefore, especially when connected with the profession of the name of Christ, was great; and of all the dangers which beset the Church, few were greater than that which resulted from the exertion of this influence when unguided by the truth and Spirit of Christ. It was often exerted in opposition to that truth, and therefore the Jew is not unfrequently addressed as if standing in the midst of the family of faith, and as if he had, measurably at least, possessed himself of the hearts and judgments of many who had confessed, and perhaps truly, the name of Jesus.

The Jews, with all their advantages, had sunk themselves into abominations which shocked even the unconverted Gentiles. “The name of God,” said the Apostle, “is blasphemed among the Gen-

tiles because of you." Their greater light they had used with greater hardihood against God. It had long been said to them, "Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them; and when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers I will not hear: your hands are full of blood." Yet, though thus laden with guilt, they were quick to condemn the Gentiles, and to magnify themselves. "Thinkest thou this, O man (the Jew is addressed), that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?" That was their thought—their cherished thought; they really did expect to escape the judgment of God even whilst committing the same enormities. Were they not Abraham's children? Was not the legislation of God and His offices, and order, and calling, possessed by them, and them alone? Were they not in virtue of these things holy? How then could they perish? Such is the reasoning of ritualism in every age. Ritualism is the great parent of self-complacency, accompanied always by worldliness, and not unfrequently by gross licentiousness. Proud of the barriers within which it has enclosed itself, and confident in the security they are supposed to give, it counts all that is without those barriers accursed, whilst the worldliness and iniquity within, it sanctifies.

But not only did the Jew self-complacently con-

trast himself with his fellow sinners among the unconverted Gentiles—he did more than this—he equally magnified himself against those among the Gentiles, who, having been converted to Christ, were, through grace, diligently observing the commandments of God. God had many saints among the Gentiles. The churches gathered at Rome, Thessalonica, Ephesus, &c., were examples. They were walking in truth and love, and adorning the doctrine of God their Saviour. But because they were not born under the Law—because they were not conformed to the ritual of Judaism, the proud Jew despised them, and accounted them accursed.

The notion that the 14th and 15th verses of this chapter describe the condition of *unconverted* Gentiles has introduced great error into its interpretation. This erroneous notion receives apparent confirmation from the manner in which the 14th verse is *translated* in our English, and *punctuated* in our printed Greek Testaments.

The 14th verse stands in our version thus: “For when the Gentiles which have not the Law, do by nature the things contained in the Law,” &c. This is an extraordinary translation. If Gentiles, or any others, can do *by nature* the things contained in the Law, if they thus become a law unto themselves and shew the work of the law written on their hearts—if all this be effected by men’s *natural* powers, then it is plain that they need neither regeneration nor salvation by grace. Man then could

save himself; and that doctrine must be false that teaches us that a man “cannot turn and prepare himself by his own natural strength and good works to faith and calling upon God.” (English Articles, x.) We could no longer say, “In me, that is, in my flesh dwelleth no good thing”—“There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.” The universal testimony both of the Scripture and of fact would be contradicted by a statement that man could *do by nature* the things of God’s law.*

But there is no such statement. In the Greek the passage should be punctuated thus—“ὅταν γὰρ ἔθνη τα μὴ νομον ἔχοντα φύσει, τα του νομου ποιῇ,” &c., translated thus—“For when the Gentiles who have not the law by nature, do the things of the

* I do not know that a more striking instance of the misuse of this text could be furnished, than by the following observations of Mr. Jowett: “There are multitudes of men and women everywhere, who have no peculiarly Christian feelings, to whom, except for the indirect influence of Christian institutions, the fact that Christ died on the Cross for their sins has made no difference, and who have, nevertheless, the common sense of truth and right almost equally with true Christians. You cannot say of them, ‘there is none that doeth good; no, not one.’ The other tone of St. Paul is more suitable, ‘When the Gentiles that know not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these not knowing the law are a law unto themselves.’ So of what we commonly term the world, as opposed to those who make a profession of Christianity, we must not shrink from saying, ‘When men of the world do by nature whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, these, not being conscious of the grace of God, do by nature what can only be done by His grace.’ Why should we make them out worse than they are?”—*Jowett*, vol. ii., p. 416.

law," &c. They who, through faith, were brought into the fold of Christ from among the Gentiles, "had not the law by nature," for they were born Gentiles, and not Jews; nevertheless, *when converted to Christ* they did what those who boasted in the law did not do, namely, observe its moral precepts and "show the work of the law written on their hearts"—the description of a converted, not of a natural state.

If the passages in which the words, "by nature" or "according to nature" occur in similar connections be examined, we shall find that they are always applied to Jew or Gentile as descriptive of their *birth-condition*. The following are examples :

"We who are Jews by nature."

Ἡμεῖς φύσει Ἰουδαῖοι. Gal. ii. 15.

"The uncircumcision which is by nature."

Ἡ ἐκ φύσεως ἀκροβυστία. Rom. ii. 27.

"The branches according to nature."

Τῶν κατὰ φύσιν κλαδῶν. Rom. xi. 21.

"The olive tree which is wild by nature."

Τῆς κατὰ φύσιν ἀγριελαιου. Rom. xi. 24.

"These who are according to nature."

Οὔτοι οἱ κατὰ φύσιν. Rom. xi. 24.

"By nature the children of wrath."

Τεκνὰ φύσει ὀργῆς. Eph. ii. 3.

In every one of these instances the words "by nature," or "according to nature," are used in relation to the *birth-condition* of those spoken of. Why then should the rendering be arbitrarily altered in the passage before us—when too, such alteration destroys a fundamental doctrine of our faith, and constrains us to say that men in their natural condition are able to do the things of God's law, and have the work of the law written on their hearts?

But (and this is by itself conclusive) in the 27th verse of Romans ii., we have the Apostle's own exposition of the fourteenth verse—the concluding part of the chapter being a re-statement and expansion of the part that had preceded. Compare the two verses.

Verse 14th, "When the Gentiles who have not the law by nature, do the things of the law," &c.

Verse 27th, "Shall not uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfil the law," &c.

Can there remain any doubt after this comparison?

Again, the persons described in the 14th and 15th verses as "shewing the work of the law written on their hearts," are described in the 29th verse as those who belong to the "spiritual circumcision." Are the Gentiles in their natural condition spiritually circumcised?

The Apostle did not wish the Jews to think that the *natural* condition of the Gentiles was anything else than a condition of ruin. He was quite ready

to admit and to teach that the Gentiles naturally were "without hope, and without God." (Eph. ii.) But the Jews wished to exclude not merely unconverted but converted Gentiles from salvation. They asserted that no Gentile, unless a proselyte to the Law, could be saved. Character, gifts, faith, power from God, were all nothing—Gentiles had not the Law, and therefore were accursed.

Nothing, evidently, can be more monstrous and wicked than such a doctrine; yet ceremonial Christianity in our own day repeats, as I have already said, the same thing. It is against this habit of mind that the second of Romans is written. It is written against such as reject those whose works bear witness that they are of God.

Ritualism in every age is in principle the same. It consigns either to perdition, or else to the uncovenanted mercies of God the most holy and the most devoted of God's servants, because they refuse to come within its ceremonial pale; whilst every thing within that pale, however evil, it deliberately sanctifies.* Against such a doctrine we have to use

* The following words of Cardinal Bellarmine are the true expression of the doctrine of Ritualism—though sometimes it may shrink from contemplating the result of its own principles: "Our judgment," says Bellarmine, "is that the Church is one only, not two,* and that that one and true church is an assembly of men bound together by the profession of the same Christian faith, and by communion in the same sacraments under the government of

* That is to say, Bellarmine utterly rejects any distinction between the elect church and the professing church—a distinction on which all truth touching these subjects hangs.

the same arguments that the Apostle here uses against the Jew. We have to show that such a doctrine subverts the very primary principle of the Divine Government which is, to distinguish between the doers of good, and the doers of evil, visiting, in the great final day, the one with blessing, the other with judgment. All mankind belong to one or the other of two great classes. They either are numbered with those who, with various degrees of light and knowledge are, nevertheless, essentially and habitually "seekers after honour, and glory, and incorruptibility;" or else they belong to those who with various degrees of evil, are habitually disobedient to the truth, and servants of unrighteousness. To the one, says the Apostle, the righteous judgment of God will award eternal life, to the other eternal destruction. But this ritualism denies. By means

lawful pastors, and especially that one vicar of Christ on earth—the Roman Pontiff. From this definition it may easily be gathered who are the men who do belong to the church, and who do not. For there are three parts of this definition, viz., profession of the true faith, communion in the sacraments, and subjection to the lawful pastor,—the Roman Pontiff. By reason of the first part, are excluded all infidels, both those who never have been in the Church, such as Jews, Turks, Pagans, as well as heretics and apostates. By reason of the second part are excluded Catechumens, and excommunicated persons; seeing that the one have not been admitted to communion in the sacraments, and the others have been ejected. By reason of the third are excluded schismatics, who have the faith in the sacraments, but are not in subjection to the lawful Pastor, and therefore, externally to the church, profess the faith and perceive the sacraments. But all others are included, even if they be reprobate, wicked and impious." —Bellarmine de Eccles. Milit. Lib. iii. cap. ii.

of its ceremonies it sanctifies the doers of unrighteousness, and condemns the doers of good.

All the saved belong to the class of those "who by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory and honour, and incorruptibility." How they are brought into that class (viz., by grace through faith) this chapter does not teach us. That is reserved for a subsequent part of the Epistle. It is not the object of this chapter to declare the Gospel of the grace of God whereby all who believe are instantly brought, by the effectual power of God, through the strait gate into the narrow way. Its object is not to set forth the Gospel, but to argue against the dark delusions of ritualism, which would sanctify unholiness by self-devised forms, and exclude vital godliness, because it rejects those forms, from all hope and from all blessing.

NOTES ON CHAPTER II.

Verses 1 & 3.

“ Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man,” &c.

“ And thinkest thou this, O man,” &c.

O man.] That these words were addressed to the Jew is evident from the 17th verse—“ Behold, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the Law,” &c. The Jew considered himself to be raised above the ordinary human level. He stood, in his own estimate, on a higher elevation than that of mankind at large. But the words, “ O man,” thus emphatically addressed to him by the Apostle, were intended to disallow the claim. Men they were, and as men they would be judged; and those eternal and unchanging principles which mark certain fixed relations of God to man, could not be set aside or escaped by their vain pretensions.

A similar use of the word “ *world* ” may be observed in our Lord’s addresses to the Jews, in the Gospel of John. They, as being “ Abraham’s children ” and “ Moses’s disciples,” persisted in asserting their title to a standing different from, and above,

that of the world at large. The Lord Jesus refused to acknowledge the claim in the sense in which they preferred it, namely, as entitling them to blessing. He said that their works proved (whatever their privileges) that they were "of the world;" and therefore on the world's level they must stand. Happy for them that He was the bringer of mercies that were directed not towards Israel as righteous, but toward the world as sinners. These mercies were open to Israel, but they could only have them by renouncing all claim to fancied superiority, and by coming in on the low level of the world as sinners.

Hence the emphasis which throughout the Gospel of John is thrown on the word "world," when used in connection with the mercies brought by the Lord Jesus.

"That was the true Light which lighteneth (not Israel merely, but) every man, coming (not into Israel merely, but) into the world."

"For God so loved (not Israel merely, but) the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him might not perish, but have eternal life."

"The bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life (not of Israel merely, but) of the world."

There are many more instances both in the Gospel and in the Epistles of John, but those which have been cited may suffice for an example.

The first of these texts, viz., that from John i. respecting the true Light, has been so frequently perverted from its proper meaning, that it requires some notice. Many in their quotation of this verse substitute the word "ENlighten" for "lighten"—using "enlighten" to denote that inward reception of light which is true only of those of whom it is said, "God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined IN our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

To "lighten," that is, to shed light upon surrounding objects, is the proper meaning of φωτίζω, the word employed in John i. 9, and in the following passages :

Luke xi. 36, "As when a candle *doth give thee light.*"

1 Cor. iv. 5, "Who shall bring to light (or rather *shed light on*) the things of darkness."

Rev. xxi. 23, "The city had no need of the sun, for the glory of God did *lighten* it."

Rev. xxii. 5, "They need no candle, for the Lord *giveth them light.*"

In all these passages the word φωτιζω is used, and evidently means to diffuse or shed light as a candle or as the sun : but whether the light so dispensed becomes ENlightening, depends on the nature of the objects on which it falls. It may fall on things which have no powers of perception.

In Christ "the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared." Its aspect is towards all men. The lifting up of the brazen serpent was a manifestation of love towards every Israelite : and so the lifting up of Jesus on the Cross is the manifestation of love towards every child of Adam. It is a light of love which lighteneth or shineth on all men. It is said unto all, "Look unto Him, and be ye saved."

Accordingly, this verse in John after shewing who the true light was, even Jesus, declares that it is not restricted as to its shining ; but that, like the sun, it lightens all men. Although the sun's rays may in some instances meet with obstacles and be intercepted, yet it can be truly said to shine on all creation. It may find many things which have no power of perception, for there are rocks and trees and blind men ; yet it shines steadily on all, and *lightens* where it does not ENlighten. So is it with Christ. The light of His love has arisen on all men. The aspect of His Cross is toward all men. Our unfaithfulness or want of zeal may fail in removing the covering which rests on many a heathen land, or may cause the rays of His love

to fall weakened or distorted : yet still this light has arisen on the world and shall continue to shine until the end comes. “The grace of God which bringeth salvation (*i.e.*, the grace of God in Christ, for it is that alone that is *saving*) hath appeared unto all men ;” consequently, if men despise or reject it, they are their own destroyers ; and when we have acknowledged the truth of this, it is neither possible, nor would it be profitable, to measure the different degrees of responsibility which attach to those who may hide, reject, or be hidden from its beams. Only let us remember, that there is the difference of Heaven and Hell between those of whom it is written, that “the God of this world hath blinded their eyes, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ should shine unto them,” and those of whom it is said in contrast, that God hath shined IN, that is, ENlightened their hearts “to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” Such is the difference between believers and the world.

Verse 4.

“Or despisest thou the riches of His goodness and forbearance and longsuffering ; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance.

Or despisest thou.] It is a solemn thought not only for the Jew but for all ritualists, that by resting, as they do, in forms and ordinances and supposing themselves to be justified thereby, they virtually despise the goodness of God in calling them to repentance and to the grace of the Gospel. He who supposes that his sins are remitted by means of priestly ceremonies will sin on, and imagine himself nevertheless to be forgiven. He who sees not the iniquity of the appointed feasts and solemn meetings where lip-worship is substituted for that worship which can only exist where Truth and the Spirit of Truth are, will not repent of that iniquity or seek to the grace that can pardon it. He who claims to be justified whether by baptism or by any other *ceremony*, will no longer stand before God as one who needs to be justified by personal faith in Jesus. Hence ritualists are always stern opposers of all testimony to the *finished* work of Jesus on the Cross. Their lips never say, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and THOU SHALT BE SAVED"—at least they never say this without corrective comments, that deprive these blessed words of all their significance and simplicity. One of the Popish Bishops (I think it was Gardiner, the persecutor) used to say that it was idle to talk about justification by faith *if* baptismal regeneration were admitted, for how could a man be justified in baptism and then be preached to as unjustified? Anglican Romanism says the same thing.

There can be no more important question than that which Nicodemus put to the Lord, "*How* can these things be—*how* can a man be born again?" It is useless to press on men the necessity of regeneration unless they be informed also of the means. Our Lord does not *seem* to answer the question of Nicodemus; He seems abruptly to turn to another subject, for He suddenly speaks of the serpent of brass, but in speaking of that emblem as referring to Himself, He does answer the question, for He says that all who look to Him lifted on the Cross as the dying Israelite looked to the brazen serpent, "have eternal life," that is, are regenerate. The Church, therefore (and by the Church, I mean all who believe) are not left in ignorance of the instrumental means of regeneration. They have them ready for their use. It is not, indeed, a priestly ordinance; it is testimony to the antitypical serpent of brass. They may present that object to their children and to all men; and whosoever believeth hath everlasting life. "The foolishness of preaching" is that "whereby God saveth them that believe." "The word is nigh thee, even in thy lips and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith which we preach, that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart that God hath raised him from the dead, THOU SHALT BE saved" (Rom. x.). How have we reason to bless God for the simplicity of these words!

Verse 6.

“Who will render unto every man according to his deeds, &c.”

All believers, from the moment they believe, are justified. They are pronounced in the courts of God to be free from the imputation of sin, and become heirs of eternal life. But there is a time coming, when the blessings thus promised and covenanted to them are to be openly awarded, and the righteousness of the award will be proved by an appeal to certain deeds by which all the redeemed who have lived long enough to think and act responsibly, will be shown to be persons who have *practically* owned God and Christ. See Matthew xxv. and various other passages. The evidence may be, the having given a cup of cold water to a disciple in the name of a disciple, or it may be the services of an Apostle. There may be great difference as to degrees of fruit-bearing; but one good cluster of fruit proves that the tree is good; “for a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit.” And although in respect of God, that is with respect to His holiness and its claims,* none can be justified except through faith, on the ground of what Another has done for them, yet the claim of believers to the possession of faith, or, to use the words of James,

* “For if Abraham were justified by works he hath whereof to glory, but not in reference to (*προς*) God.” (Rom. iv.)

their "*saying*" that they have faith—living faith, will be sustained by an appeal to some of their works, and in that sense they will be justified by works. Thus in Hebrews xi. the works of many of the family of faith are dwelt on, not as justifying them before God, but as evidences of their being those who owned Him, His people, and His Truth, and so served Him, whilst the rest of the world forgot Him.

A believer is made the recipient of certain blessings which are fixed and unalienable, because dependent exclusively on the power of God. Such blessings are spoken of in the Scripture as having a character of perpetuity in them that could not attach to anything that even partially depended on the powers of the creature. Thus believers are said "to be alive unto God IN Christ Jesus:" "to be quickened together with Him:" "to be seated in heavenly places in Him." All such passages direct our minds to heaven and to blessing sunalterably given there, because given exclusively in Another, even in Christ risen. But there are certain powers already communicated to believers—already placed within them, even whilst they are yet in the earth, which have as much the character of perpetuity and unchangeableness as those which are given in Christ above. Thus the fact of the "new man" having been created in believers by the Spirit of God, and the fact that the Holy Spirit dwells in them abidingly, give to the family of faith certain

present *practical* powers and characteristics that are as unchangeable as the Divine Spirit who is the Author of those powers. It is in reference to this that the Apostle Peter says that God's own Divine power hath "been given to us," or "made our endowment" (δεδωρημενης) "in all things that pertain to life and godliness." Hence also believers are called "doers of good," "lovers of God," "lovers of the brethren," "seekers of glory," &c. In all the passages where such titles are applied to them, the context, as well as the form of expression used, imply that they are such habitually and unchangeably: consequently, as being necessarily this, in virtue of a power placed within them by God, they are set in direct contrast with the unbelieving world, which is described as being marked by equally fixed habitude of evil. It is in this sense that believers are described throughout the Epistle of John, as being essentially and habitually "doers of good," and as incapable of being "doers of iniquity;" by which is not meant that a believer can never sin (on the contrary, the same Epistle says, "if any sin we have an Advocate"), but it is meant that believers can never be what the world are, essentially and habitually "doers of evil." Peter essentially differed from Judas, even when he denied his Master: the effect of the look of Christ on him was an evidence. Neither his faith in his Master nor his love to his Master had really failed—"his seed had remained in him" as in one born of God, and results proved it.

Verses 14 & 15.

“For when the Gentiles, who have not the Law by nature, do the things of the Law, these, having not the Law, are a law unto themselves; who show the work of the Law written on their hearts, their conscience bearing concurrent witness, and their thoughts, one with the other, accusing or else excusing.”

I have already remarked on the mispunctuation of the first clause of this passage in the Greek text as ordinarily printed, and on the erroneous translation found in our English version. It seems strange that all who know that in the flesh “dwelleth no good thing,” should not shrink from the very sound of the words, “do BY NATURE the things of the Law.”

Nor are the words that follow less forcible. Can we say of men in their natural state that “the Law” or “the work of the Law” is written on their hearts? If so, men would be by nature under the new Covenant of grace—they would be forgiven and be born of God, for the two distinctive blessings of the new Covenant are, first, “Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more;” secondly, “I will write my laws upon their hearts that they shall not depart from me.” The first of these blessings is the result of the sacrificial work of the Lord Jesus; the second is the consequence of “the new man” having been created in believers, the moment they believe,

by the quickening power of the Spirit of God. "The new man" (which is within them as the embryo of their new being, to be perfected in resurrection glory) is said in the Scripture to have been "created according to God in righteousness and true holiness." Eph. iv. It therefore necessarily embodies in itself the principles of the divine Law, and consequently wherever it exists, the Law may well be said to be written on the heart. To teach that men *naturally* have the Law written on their hearts would be indeed to teach universal reconciliation, and universal regeneration.

When we speak of the Law being "written upon the hearts" of believers, or of "the work of the Law" being written on their hearts, it is *virtually* the same truth presented in two different aspects. If we wish to direct attention to the fact of "the new man" having in it certain living and operative principles of good which lead to corresponding developments in action, we speak of "the law being written on the heart." But when we speak, not of the motive principle of action, but of the condition of the heart subjectively, as internally answering to the requirements of God's law, then we say the work of the law is written on it.

The expression "work of the law" means simply that which, in any specific case, the law pronounces right and commands us to perform. Take love as an example. The Law commands us to love others. But the command of the Law could not secure the

manifestation of love even in one single action, much less produce it as an abiding principle in the soul. But in the case of a believer, love, the chiefest of all the works commanded by the Law, is found, not only developed in his actions, but resident in his heart. It is written there.

The next clause imperfectly translated in our version speaks of their conscience “bearing concurrent witness” (*συμμαρτυρουσης*)—that is, their conscience bears witness together with their heart (the heart being the seat of the understanding and of the affections) to the rightness of the path they tread. This could not be said of conscience in its natural state, but only when, to use the words of the Apostle, it “bears witness in the Holy Ghost.”

The next clause also speaks of their thoughts within them as if arrayed in hostile opposition to each other. “Thoughts” are here personified. They are described as if assembled together (*μεταξυ αλληλων*, means, “in the midst of each other,” that is, *in one another’s presence*) and there arraying themselves on different sides—the one company of thoughts approving, the other condemning and opposing the course of conduct in question. Are not believers well acquainted with this inward discussion? Whenever they are about to enter on any course which their “new man” and their conscience sanction, are they not well aware that some of their thoughts (*viz.*, those that are from and under the control of the Holy Spirit) encourage and approve;

whilst others (those that are from nature and from Satan) resist and say, "that be far from thee, that shall not be unto thee." But such inward litigation is found only where there is life; it is not found where there is death in trespasses and sins; for evidently there can be no inward opposition to right conduct where there is no right conduct to elicit such opposition. He who treads only the path of the world knows no other, and therefore cannot be occupied with questions that arise out of circumstances found only in the narrow way. There is no inward litigation, until life by its entrance has broken the quietude of evil that previously reigns within, undisturbed—except perhaps by the occasional and easily silenced monition of conscience. The monition of conscience must not be confounded with that inward power of steadily maintaining and enforcing the distinctions between right and wrong which these verses describe. Felix was admonished by his conscience; but he knew not what it was for thoughts of wisdom and of truth to be arrayed within him against thoughts of folly and falsehood, for no wisdom was in him.

Verse 29.

"Circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."

The last four verses of this chapter are a condensation of the preceding argument, and do, of themselves, show that the Apostle in the 14th verse refers to spiritually circumcised Gentiles, and not to the unconverted. The words of the 14th verse, "when the Gentiles who have not the Law by nature, do the things of the Law"—the words of the 26th verse, "if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the Law"—the words of the 27th verse, "shall not uncircumcision by nature, if it fulfil the Law," and the words of the last verse respecting inward circumcision, may be all regarded as equivalent descriptions, capable of being referred to converted Gentiles only. Such were Jethro, Rahab, Ruth, Jonadab, the Rechabites, and others in the Old Testament; and in the New, the Centurion, the Syro-phœnician woman, Cornelius, and the Gentile Churches gathered under St. Paul.

When the converted Gentiles are spoken of as "keeping the Law," "doing the things of the Law," &c., it is not meant that they kept it in the sense in which CHRIST kept it, *i.e.*, perfectly, in every jot and in every tittle, as to every outward act and every inward feeling, unreservedly and always. Perfectness of obedience was the distinctive characteristic of "the Holy One," manifest in the flesh. The most faithful amongst believers observe the commandments of God imperfectly, with many shortcomings and failures; so that even the Apostle James had to say, "in many things we all offend."

Even their most perfect services can only be accepted through the name of Jesus. Thus the Apostle Peter speaks of believers as "a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God *through* (*δια*) *Jesus Christ*." They need Him too as "a High Priest to bear *the iniquity* of their holy things."

Believers are spoken of in the passage above quoted as "circumcised." Circumcision is in the New Testament antitypically applied to believers in two senses. First, they are spoken of as circumcised (*i.e.*, separated from the flesh) by the death and resurrection of Christ, in whom as their substitute they judicially died; in whom also, as in a new covenant Head, they have risen. Looked at as thus identified with Christ, and "seated in heavenly places IN HIM," they are, of necessity, seen in separation from the flesh, and from all that they inherit from the first Adam, as "earthly." Consequently, the Church is spoken of in the Colossians as "circumcised by the circumcision made without hands" (*i.e.*, effected by no mere human instrumentality) "by the circumcision of Christ," *i.e.*, by a circumcision not derived from the Law but from Christ, who has taken the Church into union with Himself—assigned to it the results of His death and resurrection, and thereby brought it into an unearthly condition of being, above the skies, where it is thoroughly separated from everything that characterised its condition in the flesh

here. The death and resurrection of Christ, therefore, are the means by which God has "circumcised" His people. When at last they shall be manifested in the perfectness of their risen glory, they will easily be recognised as the true "circumcised ones"—separated from all that once characterised them as men below, by a separation received in and through Christ.

But secondly, the Holy Spirit is given to believers in order to effectuate in them, measurably at least, certain results corresponding to the blessings granted to them in Christ. Accordingly, seeing that believers have been, by God, separated from the flesh in virtue of the union which He has given them with Christ risen, the Holy Spirit is given them in order that they might realise this separation, and live as those who have died to the world but are alive unto God. They who are thus practically separate—separate in heart, separate in their testimonies, separate in their ways, show that they belong to the spiritual circumcision. It is in this practical sense that "circumcision" is used in the verse just quoted.

From the closing words of this chapter, viz., "whose praise is not of men but of God," we may learn that they who give their adherence to Ritualism in any shape, substituting form for power, and maintaining the authority of office where gift and power from God is wanting, escape the offence of the Cross, and receive praise, not reproach from

men. This has been abundantly verified in every age. Neither Ritualism nor Rationalism are ever content to “go without the gate” and to suffer. They seek to establish themselves in man’s city and to reign. They are *of* the world—the path of the world they tread—the doom of the world they must inherit.

Yet it is still said to every Ritualist, and to every Rationalist, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.” “His BLOOD cleanseth from all sin.”

INDEX.

f means following, *n* means note.

Of those which are *explained* the page is given in thick type.

	PAGE.		PAGE.
Advent, the Second ..	67 to 72	Epistles	3
Antioch, Peter at ..	68, 87, 99	Erskine, Thomas ..	76
Aorist	90	Evangelise	8
Apostles (Fourteen) ..	23	Evidence, external ..	42
Apostles might err ..	87	Evidence, internal ..	59
Appeasement	73ff, 93ff	Evolution	58n
Arianism	31	Faith, instrumental ..	38
Aristotle	65	Felix	20, 42, 121
Article IX.	91	Firstborn from dead ..	31
Article X.	102	Flesh, contrast Spirit ..	32
Atonement	73ff, 93ff	Generation, This, this age	71
Authority of Scripture	66, 86f	Gentile converts..	15, 101, 118f
Bacon, Lord	49	Gentile paganism ..	9 to 15
Bank-note	39	Geology	49 to 59
Baptismal regeneration ..	113	Gifts of the world to come	4
Became, not <i>was made</i> ..	30	Godhead, better <i>Divinity</i> ..	13n
Befooled	48	Gospel for the world	108 to 113
Beggarly elements	68	Gospel of God	25
Bellarmino on the Church	105	Gospel kept long silent ..	28
Birth-condition, <i>φύσις</i> ..	103	Habitual character	117
Born again	61	Headship	33, 45, 56
Broad Church	60	Heathen responsibility ..	19
Called Apostle, A	23	Heathen refinement ..	14
Church, elect and profess-		Heavens created	57
ing	105	Humanity of Christ.. ..	32f
Church, <i>in</i> Rome, not <i>of</i>		Hypotheses geologic.. ..	50
Rome	6	Idolatry, its sinfulness	19, 63
Circumcision	121, 117f	Immaculate conception ..	82
Civilised heathenism ..	14	Imputation	86 to 95
Classic writers	19	Incarnation no union ..	77f
Conscience	4, 20, 42f, 120	Infallible Scripture ..	87, 97
Conversion, a death-bed..	79	Inward acts and outward	65
Covenant the New	118	Israel's conversion	5
Creation's testimony ..	10	James's use of works ..	115f
Creation, six days	51	Jew addressed as "O man"	108
Create, to	59	Jew so often addressed ..	98
Creed, Nicene	31	Jewish influence in early	
Culpa and reatus	89	church	99
Days, literal	56	Jowett, Prof.	60 to 96
Death by sin	56	Knowledge imperfect at best	54f
Declared, better <i>defined</i> ..	34	Knowledge does not save	10 to 12
Dispensation, law and grace	29	Levite separation	24
Divinity, not <i>Godhead</i> ..	13, 42	Levite service	36
Do by nature works of the		Longevity before the Flood	53
law	101ff, 118	Luther.. .. .	37
Enlighten, or lighten ..	110	Marcus Antoninus	44

INDEX.

	PAGE.
Naomi	6
National Churches	45
Nature, do by	101f, 118
Nature, witness to God ..	10, 42
Nazarite Separation.. ..	24
Newman, Cardinal	52
Owen, Dr. John	91
Outward acts and inward ..	65
Oxford's place in Europe..	48
Pantheism	60
Paradise	53
Parenthetic verses	35
Paul's early life	3
Paul's Gospel	28
Personal transgression ..	88
Peter at Antioch .. 68, 87,	99
Philosophic Christianity ..	17
Powell, Prof.	51 to 59
Practical fruits of Life ..	115
Priestly Service.. .. .	35
Professing church and elect church	105
Prophetic mention of the Gospel	28
Protestantism	7
Purgatory	4
Reatus and culpa	89
Reformation, the	37
Regeneration	61
Resurrection condition of Christ	32ff
Righteousness of God ..	37, 86

	PAGE.
Ritualism .. 98 to 107, 113f,	125
Scripture, authoritative ..	65f
Scripture, infallible .. 87,	93, 97
Secular government	82f
Separated unto God	24
Servantship and slavery ..	22
Service, priestly	35
Sin, the unpardonable	4
Sinai convulsions	53
Sinai words	56f
Socrates	15
Son of God, in three senses	30
Stages in Gentile evil	13
Testimony of Churches 16 to	20
Testimony of Nature 10, 42,	59
Testimony of Scripture ..	26ff, 51, 86 93
Testimony of the Spirit ..	4, 86, 116, 120, 124,
Thessalonians and the Advent	67 to 72
Thoughts personified	120
Transgressions set down in account	88
Trench, Archbishop	46
Trinity unite for blessing ..	35
Types	85
Union not by incarnation ..	77f
Vicarious suffering of Christ	94ff
Westminster Assembly	91
Works justifying us	115
World-wide Gospel 3, 108 to	113

	PAGE.
נָאָם	59
גִּבּוֹר	34
דּוֹר	71
γενεα	71
δουλος	22
δωρεω	117
εκ πιστewς	38f
ελλογεω	88
επιλαμβανομαι	77n
εφ' ω	90
θειότης	10, 13, 46
ιλασμος	93 to 96

	PAGE.
καθιστημι	74, 89
κατα intensive	41
καταχρασις	41
κατεχω	40
κτιζω	59
λατρευω	35
λογιζομαι	88
μεταξυ	120
ομιζω	34
προαιρεσις	65
συμμαρτυρεω	120
φυσις	103
φωτιζω	110

SCRIPTURAL INDEX.

	CHAP.	VER.		PAGE.
Genesis	22	..	..	26
Exodus	19	23	..	34
	21	5	..	23
Psalms	2	7	..	31
	19	1	..	41
	72	..	..	33
Isaiah	1	14 <i>f</i>	..	100
	26	19	..	27
	53	5	..	26
Jeremiah	23	6	..	27
Micah	5	2	..	30
Habakkuk	2	4	..	39 <i>f</i>
Matthew	7	18	..	115
	21	38	..	40
	24	..	..	70
Mark	8	23	..	78 ⁿ
Luke	1	35	..	31
	6	13	..	23
	9	47	..	78 ⁿ
	10	7	..	24
	19	11	..	
	21	9	..	70
John	1	9	..	109^f
	3	16	79, 109,	114
	6	51	..	109
Acts	8	35	..	27
	13	33	..	31
Romans	1	..	..	17
		2	..	26
		3	..	30
		4	..	34
		7 <i>f</i>	..	35
		17	..	36
		19	..	41
		20	..	46
		26, 28	..	19
	2	1 <i>ff</i> 17	..	108
		4	..	112
		6	..	115
		14	..	101, 118
		27	..	103
	2	29	..	121
	3	21	..	28, 37
	4	2	..	115 ⁿ
		5	..	39
	5	12	..	90

	CHAP.	VER.		PAGE.
Romans	5	19	..	74, 89
	9	1	..	120
	10	9	..	114
	11	21, 24	..	103
	16	25	..	28
1 Cor.	2	13	..	86
	4	5	..	110
	7	25	..	87
		30 <i>f</i>	..	40 <i>f</i>
	8	7	..	63
	9	1	..	23
		18	..	41
	14	37	..	86
2 Cor.	4	6	..	110 <i>f</i>
	5	16	..	32
	8	23	..	24
	13	4	..	32
Galatians	2	15	..	103
	3	7	..	78 <i>n</i>
		16	..	33
		21	..	43
Ephesians	2	3	..	103
		6	..	34, 45
	3	5	..	29
Philippians	2	25	..	24
	3	9	..	37
Colossians	1	18	..	31
	2	9	..	13, 46
		11	..	123
1 Thess.	4	15	..	73
2 Thess.	2	3	..	72
1 Timothy	3	16	..	34
	5	18	..	24
2 Timothy	3		..	17
Philemon		18	..	88
Hebrews	2	16	..	77
	6	5	..	4
	7	3	..	30
	10	23	..	40
	11	3	..	59
James	2	14	..	115
1 Peter	1	21	..	25
2 Peter	1	3	..	117
1 John			..	117
Revelation	2	2	..	24
	21	23	..	110
	22	3	..	22
		5	..	110

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